



Shropshire Museums
Collections and Curatorial Services

COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT POLICY
2017-2020

INCOPROPARATING:
COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY
DOCUMENTATION POLICY
CARE AND CONSERVATION POLICY

LUDLOW MUSEUM
RESOURCE CENTRE



SHREWSBURY
MUSEUM
& ART
GALLERY



*A copy of this policy may be
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www.shropshire.gov.uk/museums

Executive Summary

A museum is distinguished by its unique collection of objects that forms the core of all its activities such as exhibitions, education sessions and research. Through such services, museums enable people to explore collections for inspiration, learning and enjoyment. These collections are a tangible link between the past, present and future and it is a museums governing body's responsibility to balance the interests of each generation by safeguarding collections through appropriate standards of care.

Museums develop collections using long term plans that are socially responsive. They reject items with dubious provenance or for which they do not have the resources to care for. The majority of items in our care are acquired through public gifts or purchased with grants on the basis that they will be retained in the public domain in perpetuity.

Over the last 10 years collecting has reduced considerably with work focusing instead on understanding, organising and unlocking the potential of our existing collections and finding a range of innovative and sustainable ways to improve access them. We are currently working through the major and important collections built up over almost 200 years. Our focus for the next five years will be improving the long term care and management of these collections.

Like all Accredited Museums, and in accordance with the Code of Ethics for Museums, Shropshire Museums regularly reviews, published and adheres to an Acquisition and Disposal or Development Policy agreed by its governing body. This policy document is realistic in terms of the resources required to sustain the collections it manages today whilst meeting its responsibilities to future generations. It recognises the current fiscal challenges facing the Council and the need to rationalise holdings and focus resources in order to safeguard key collections. This policy addresses issues of the context and legitimacy of acquisitions, due diligence, long-term care, documentation and relevance over-riding, institutional aims.

Shropshire Museums' Collections Management Policy also includes our approved Documentation Policy Statement which informs the Documentation Procedural Manual. It also includes our approved Collection Care and Conservation policy statement. All these elements of the Collection Management Policy take into consideration the current guidance issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Arts Council England, the Collections Trust and the Museums Association.

This Policy was last reviewed on the 00 June 2017 and was approved by Lezley Picton, Deputy Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture on behalf of Shropshire Council's Cabinet.



Note on Formatting

All statements in grey boxes are required under the Museum Accreditation Standard published by the MLA in 2004 and updated in 2011.

Arts Council England will be notified of any changes to the collections development policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of collections.

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01. Museum Governance and Management

01.01 Constitution and governance

The County Museum Service was established in 1974 by agreement between five of the six former Shropshire Boroughs. At this time the title over the collections of Acton Scott Historic Working Farm, Ludlow Museum and Much Wenlock Museum were transferred to the new County Museum Service along with Shropshire Council's Education Department Historic Collection. Likewise, the remaining collections from Whitchurch Museum were transferred following the earlier closure of the town museum.

In 2009 the Service merged with Shrewsbury Museums (Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council) to create a single museum service for the new unitary County of Shropshire.

Currently, Shropshire Museums directly manages four accredited museum sites:

- 1) Acton Scott Historic Working Farm
- 2) Ludlow Museum Resource Centre
- 3) Much Wenlock Museum
- 4) Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery

Shropshire Museums provides curatorial services and collections on loan to Ludlow Museum at the Buttercross which is managed by Ludlow Town Council under a Service Level Agreement.

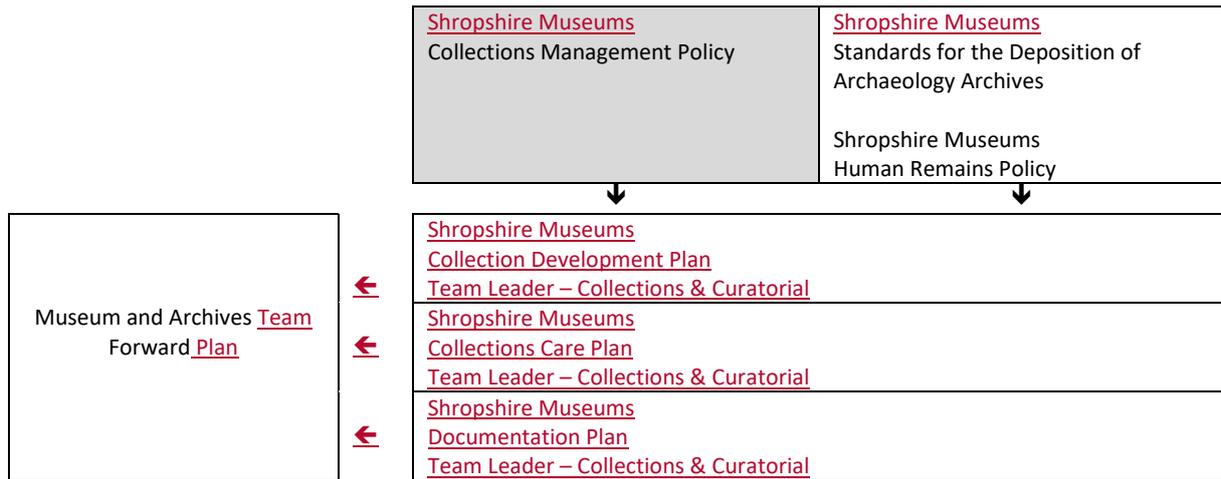
Shropshire Museums provides a range of outreach services including educational sessions to schools and museum mentoring and loans to a number of independent museums in the county. It is also responsible for Coleham Pumping Station and Shrewsbury Castle and shares Shropshire Council storage facilities at Atcham Business Park, Shrewsbury and Hortonwood Business Park, Telford.

Shropshire Museums now forms part of the Museums and Archives Team within the Commissioning Directorate of Shropshire Council. As part of Shropshire Council, Shropshire Museums operates in accordance with the policies and regulations of the Council.

01.02 Policy review procedure

The first Acquisition & Disposal Policy was approved by Committee on 6th December 1991 for the period 1992-1997, to be reviewed every five years. The following document is the revision of this policy to cover the period 2017-2022 and was submitted to Council for approval on 05/01/2017. It has been prepared to meet the requirements of the Code of Ethics for Museums, the Accreditation Standard and the Benchmarks in Collection Care for Museums, Archives and Libraries.

The collections development policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, and at least once every five years. There is an annual review of progress against the Collection Development Plan, Collection Care Plan and Documentation Plan, which contributes to the revision of this policy. This ensures a planned approach to improvements in overall collection development and care. Shropshire Museums also has a system in place for monitoring the use of its collections. As part of this revision process Shropshire Museums addresses any inadequacies in conservation and collection care that have been identified. A statement is included within this document which provides an overview of each collection, its condition and recommendations for collection improvements.



01.03 Status of collections

Museums behave as ethical guardians as well as owners of collections. They never relinquish the trust invested in them, without public consent.

Shropshire Museums' collections are held in trust by Shropshire Council in perpetuity for the benefit, education and enjoyment of the people of Shropshire and visitors to the County.

The museum collection is defined as a Heritage Asset and so Shropshire Council recognises that the value of its Museum Collection cannot be fully reflected in a financial value or price. It is also recognises that any value assigned to the Museum Collection is inalienable because Shropshire Council cannot sell or dispose of the collection without external consent and/or repayment of grant aid.

01.04 Statement of purpose

The Museum Service Mission Statement is as follows:



This vision and key aims is achieved by us through a Team Business Plan which identifies key objectives for the coming year. These objectives are informed by Shropshire Council’s objectives and the priorities identified by the review of key collection management data.

01.05 Policy principles

Shropshire Museums will ensure that both acquisitions and disposals are carried out openly and with transparency.

By definition, the museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for the benefit of the public in relation to its stated objectives. The governing body therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons must be established before consideration is given to any acquisition to the collection, or the disposal of any items in the museum’s collection.

Shropshire Museums recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museums Association Code of Ethics when considering acquisition and disposal.

01.06 Exceptions

Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

Any exceptions to this policy will only be because the museum is:

- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin.
- Acting with the permission of authorities with requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin.

In these cases the museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority. The museum will document when these exceptions occur.

01.07 Curatorial advice

Shropshire Museums currently employs one member of staff with relevant degrees, a postgraduate Masters or Diploma in Museum Studies and substantial relevant experience evidenced by ongoing CPD:

Emma-Kate Lanyon

Team Leader
(Collections and Curatorial
Services)

Collections manager and a specialist in archaeology
curation. Associate of the Museums Association.

This officer chairs the Shropshire Museums Curatorial Board which oversees all acquisition and disposal decisions and Collection Management Policy. The Senior Archivist for Shropshire Council also attends the Curatorial Board meetings to provide advice on the curation of archival collections.

As part of on-going collection care programmes additional expert curatorial advice and work is commissioned from consultants for specific sections of the collection as required.

01.08 Conservation advice

Shropshire Museums has assessed the need for conservation staff and has made arrangements to meet this need within the resources available to it.

Shropshire Museums has access to a specialist paper conservator employed by Shropshire Archives. Shropshire Museums also has a purpose built conservation laboratory at Ludlow Museum Resource Centre. Specialist advice and conservation work is obtained for specific areas of the collection from appropriate specialist conservators selected through the ICON Conservation Register.

All contracted-out conservation work is undertaken on the basis of guidelines for competitive tendering and professional practice and in line with Shropshire Council's procurement policy.

01.09 Staff and volunteer training

Staff and volunteers receive full induction including a collection management briefing. Staff and volunteer training needs are assessed regularly through annual appraisals. Staff and volunteers attend internal and external training courses where appropriate and training is evaluated through the appraisal system.

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02. Acquisition Policy

Detailed collection descriptions and collection specific policies follow. However, a number of principles are common to all collections:

02.01 Developing collections which are representative of all

Museums belong to everybody. They exist to serve the public. They should enhance the quality of life for everyone, both today and in the future. They are funded because of their positive social cultural, educational and economic impact.

Museums seek the views of communities, users and supporters and value the contribution they make. Museums actively involve them in developing policy, and balance this with the role of museums in leading and promoting debate. Museums engage with changing needs and values.

Shropshire Museums works to ensure that its collections areas representative of all Shropshire's principle stories and communities as possible. However, we recognised that certain racial, disability, gender, sexual orientation and age groups are currently under represented. We will work to address this imbalance and ensure that we work to tell the story of the Shropshire through the eyes of the many varied groups and individuals which have shaped it.

02.02 Current limitations on collecting

Caring for objects in perpetuity carries a financial cost both in resources and staff time. The ability of Shropshire Museums to meet the requirements of the long term stewardship, storage and care of artefacts and specimens will be a factor in the decision to accept an item into the collection.

The museum recognises its responsibility, when acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Standard. This includes using SPECTRUM primary procedures for collections management. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

Over the last 10 years collecting has reduced considerably with work focusing instead on understanding, organising and unlocking the potential of our existing collections and finding a range of innovative and sustainable ways of creating access them. We are currently working through integrating and fully documenting the major and important collections inherited from Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council built up over almost 200 years.

The priorities for collecting are currently those objects which will be invaluable to support planned displays; those items which are so significant that they must, if possible, be acquired for the public benefit; those items which can be used as duplicates to support activities such as hands-on workshops or which enhance the collections and move our museum collections towards regional or national status.

02.03 The decision making process

The policy for agreeing acquisitions is outlined below.

Even once it is established that an item falls within the criteria set out within Shropshire Museum's Collecting Policy an object will only be acquired once a defined procedure has been undertaken.

- An acquisition statement is prepared which considers the items significance, relevance to the collection and potential long term impact upon us.
- The potential acquisition is discussed by the Museum Service's Curatorial Board which takes a decision upon the appropriateness of the acquisition. For significant acquisitions, the Curatorial Board will notify the appropriate Portfolio Holder of its decision.

All potential acquisitions including those through the Treasure Act are dealt with by a Curatorial Board which makes a formal decision on whether or not to pursue an item. This is handled carefully as some cases are high profile and emotive and a formal process has to be observed. The majority of material is rejected. Those items pursued for purchase are acquired principally on the basis of external fund raising from charitable trusts, interested groups.

The Curatorial Board is made up of all staff with a curatorial professional qualification specialism and experience. Other members of staff and peers with an interest in a potential acquisition are also invited to attend.

02.04 Funding of purchases

Shropshire Museums recognises that prudent purchases can improve the quality of our collections. In many cases purchases by us have increased the reputation of key collections and thereby increased the number and quality of subsequent donations made. In some cases the value of subsequent donations has out-weighted the direct cost to Shropshire Museums.

In any case where a purchase is proposed Shropshire Museums will seek to establish a fair market value for the item/s. Shropshire Museum no longer has a designated Acquisition Budget. We will seek grant aid and external sources of funding to support purchases wherever possible.

02.05 Virtual collecting

In certain instances some items which fall under Shropshire Museums' Collecting Policy may be best collected virtually rather than accepted the object into the accessioned collection. This would be applicable where items have a high conservation costs but a low historic or scientific worth, where duplicate items already exist in the reference and handling collection or where transfer of title would be associated with unacceptable conditions.

Virtual collecting also allows us to create a database of information about items brought in for identification ensuring that this data is available for future research.

02.06 Acquisitions outside the current stated policy

Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances, and then only after having proper consideration by the governing body of the museum itself, having regard to the interests of other museums.

If Shropshire Museums is offered or made aware of material that falls outside the collecting policy, normal procedure will be to notify a more appropriate museum or institution.

02.07 General legal requirements

The museum will undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.

In particular, Shropshire Museums will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'Country of Origin' includes the United Kingdom.)

In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, Shropshire Museums will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The Curatorial Board, on behalf of the governing body, will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.

02.08 Spoliation

Shropshire Museums will use the statement of principles 'Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period', issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

02.09 Respecting the beliefs of others

Museums try to develop constructive relationships with people who have contributed to our collections, with representatives of these people, their heirs and cultural descendants, balancing responsibilities to a range of stakeholders. Gifts and bequests of items are usually made in the expectation that items will be preserved in perpetuity. Museums reconcile the wider public interest with that expectation.

When dealing with objects which could, or subsequently do, prove contentious on religious or cultural grounds Shropshire Museums will take public opinion into consideration. In such cases we will endeavour to explain our actions and decisions openly. This applies not only to the collection of material but also to how it is stored, handled and what it is used for once added to the collection.

The Shropshire Council, acting on the advice of Shropshire Museums' professional staff, may take a decision to return human remains (unless covered by the 'Guidance for the care of human remains

in museums' issued by DCMS in 2005) , objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. The museum will take such decisions on a case by case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that only specific procedures, as described in Shropshire Museums' Disposal Policy, will be followed.

02.10 Environmental responsibility

Collections in museums represent the rich diversity of the world's natural and human environments. Museums promote learning without jeopardising this diversity. They contribute to sustainable economic activity and benefit local and wider communities.

Shropshire Museums recognises that although research, education and preservation are the principle reason for it holding specimens of endangered species or objects incorporating material from endangered species it may benefit commercially from these holdings. Shropshire Museum will, therefore, comply with The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) where necessary.

02.11 Special conditions and copyright

When title over an object is transferred to Shropshire Council absolute ownership is granted to us. Any rights of copyright or reproduction previously held by the owner will also pass to us, without condition.

There is strong presumption that no special conditions imposed upon bequest, donation or sale of an item will be accepted by Shropshire Museums.

02.12 Working with other museums

Shropshire Museums supports local voluntary run museums by providing pastoral care and professional advice. We seek to work with and complement those museums operated by independent and voluntary organisations. Some of the items we acquire are placed on long term loan with small museums across the county to improve their displays. Where possible and appropriate, we support small Accredited Museums to acquire donations offered to us which would better complement their collections. We also offer assistance to Accredited Museum in order to help them purchase Treasure items for their own collections where appropriate.

Shropshire Museums will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources. Specific references are made for each collection below.

Museum collections are held on behalf of all for present and future study. Occasionally, collections in neighbouring institutions may become 'at risk' of disposal or destruction. After taking careful and active steps to find an alternative suitable permanent location for 'at risk' collections, it may be necessary to acquire a collection as a temporary 'rescue' operation even though such collections may fall outside the Museums detailed Collections Management Policy (see exceptions above).

03. Loans

Museums lend their collections outside the museum in order to promote access to them, increase knowledge and understanding of them, and to support other museums. They balance their role in safeguarding items for the benefit of future users with their obligation to optimise access for and engagement with present users. Museums borrow items from outside the museum in order to complement and enhance the potential for learning and enjoyment in their own collection. Lending and borrowing is part of a well-managed and sustainable collection.

03.01 Basic loan principals

Shropshire Museums will share its collections willingly with other museums and will borrow items to improve the service it provides. We will consider borrowing as an alternative to acquiring new materials where appropriate. However long term and permanent loans can create uncertainty over title and lead to public resources being used for private benefit. Therefore we will not enter into long term or permanent loans and continue to renegotiate any existing loans on such terms.

Shropshire Museums will borrow items to improve the service we provide. In all instances we will be clear about reasons for borrowing, plan sufficiently in advance, and ensure that we can provide appropriate levels of care and access to the items we borrow. Shropshire Museums will consider borrowing objects as an alternative to acquiring new material, where appropriate.

Shropshire Museums exercises due diligence at all times. We will work to verify the ownership of any item being considered for loan and ensure that the current holder is legitimately able to lend.

In cases where Shropshire Museums is unable to contact the original lender, the museum assumes an object has been abandoned and will manage it as an 'unclaimed loan' using the same collection management principles as it would for a gift. If the lender has died, the executors of the estate or their legal representative, should contact the museum to inform them of the lender's wishes. If the lender made no provision for the item, the museum will negotiate with the executors, following the deaccession process, to ascertain the best course of action.

Shropshire Museums will avoid inappropriate or compromising associations with vendors, dealers or auction houses. Shropshire Museums will refuse to lend items to any exhibition that is likely to include illicitly traded or spoliated items.

03.02 The decision making process

We value the benefits of sharing collections for both lenders and borrowers. Loans enable museums to reach wider audiences, set collections in context and increase public awareness of museums. We will:

- use loans to increase access for users who cannot visit our museums
- work in a spirit of partnership and cooperation
- be transparent and communicate openly with lenders and borrowers

Shropshire Museums recognises the need to consider the security and conservation requirements against the desirability of sharing collections. Potential lenders will therefore be assessed using the United Kingdom Registrars Group Standard Facilities Report to fully document and assess the risk.

All loans requests will be considered by the Curatorial Board who will assess and manage the risks involved in loans. Shropshire Museums accepts that some risk is justified because of the public benefits that come from lending items but will work to mitigate against potential loss, damage or deterioration to collections.

All terms and conditions for loans clearly set out and agreed by both parties prior to a loan being made. These will be recorded using a Loan Agreement agreed to and signed by both parties.

03.03 Financial considerations

It is not Shropshire Museums aim to benefit financially from loans to other museums in the UK, above the actual costs incurred in the loan. However, commercially motivated loans to other institutions may be treated differently and in such cases a fee may be levied. However, we will work to minimise the financial and environmental costs incurred from a loan.

04. Disposal Policy

Shropshire Council accepts the principal that, except for sound curatorial reasons, there is a strong presumption against the disposal of any items in the museum collection. Any proposed disposals will be made within a strict framework to ensure the public's long term interest in our collections is safeguarded. The objective of disposals will remain focused upon rationalising our holdings to allow resources to be targeted at improving standards of collections care and public access to key collections.

Detailed collection descriptions and individual policies follow. However, a number of points are common to all collections:

04.01 Presumption against disposal

By definition, a museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for society in relation to its stated objectives. Shropshire Museums' governing body therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons for disposal must be established before consideration is given to the disposal of any items in the museum's collection.

The accessioned collections cannot be used as collateral for loans. In the event of Shropshire Museums being dissolved the collections would be offered to other museum authorities, with a transfer of the above requirements. Neither the collections nor individual items within them will be sold to generate income.

04.02 Exceptions

Shropshire Museums will confirm that it is legally free to dispose if an item and agreements on disposal made with donors will be taken into account.

Any decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken only after preparation of a full disposal statement for due consideration by the Curatorial Board and with agreement of Cabinet.

When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.

04.03 Motivation for disposal

The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons.

Any monies received from the disposal of items will be applied for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions but in exceptional cases improvements relating to the care of collections may be justifiable. Advice on these cases will be sought from ACE.

When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined within this policy will be followed. The method of disposal may be gift, sale, exchange or, as a last resort, destruction.

04.04 Rationalisation of collections and the disposal process

The museum recognises that the principles on which priorities for rationalisation and disposal are determined will be through a formal review process that identifies which collections are included and excluded from the review. The outcome of review and any subsequent rationalisation will not reduce the quality or significance of the collection and will result in a more useable, well managed collection.

The procedures used will meet professional standards. The process will be documented, open and transparent. There will be clear communication with key stakeholders about the outcomes and the process.

04.05 Method of disposal

All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the SPECTRUM Primary Procedures on disposal.

The governing body will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will also be taken into account.

When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.

When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale, exchange or as a last resort - destruction.

The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including public benefit, the implications for the museum's collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. Expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought.

Except, in cases of Repatriation and Restitution, a decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator or manager of the collection acting alone.

Except, in cases of Repatriation and Restitution, once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.

Except, in cases of Repatriation and Restitution, if the material is not acquired by any Accredited museum to which it was offered as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material normally through a notice on the MA's Find an

Object web listing service, an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).

Except, in cases of Repatriation and Restitution, the announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.

Except, in cases of Repatriation and Restitution, any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from the Arts Council England.

Except, in cases of Repatriation and Restitution, the proceeds of a sale will be allocated so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard. Money must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection.

Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccession and disposal.

04.06 Disposal by exchange

The nature of disposal by exchange means that the museum will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with another Accredited museum. The governing body will therefore ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process.

In cases where the governing body wishes for sound curatorial reasons to exchange material directly with Accredited or non-Accredited museums, with other organisations or with individuals, the procedures in paragraphs 16.1-5 will apply.

If the exchange is proposed to be made with a specific Accredited museum, other Accredited museums which collect in the same or related areas will be directly notified of the proposal and their comments will be requested.

If the exchange is proposed with a non-Accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, the museum will place a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, or make an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).

Both the notification and announcement must provide information on the number and nature of the specimens or objects involved both in the museum's collection and those intended to be acquired in exchange. A period of at least two months must be allowed for comments to be received. At the end of this period, the governing body must consider the comments before a final decision on the exchange is made.

04.07 Repatriation and restitution of object and human remains

Shropshire Museum's governing body, acting on the advice of the Curatorial Board may take a decision to return human remains (unless covered by the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums' issued by DCMS in 2005), objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. The museum will take such decisions on a case by case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that the procedures described above will be followed but the remaining procedures set out below will not be appropriate.

04.08 Disposal by destruction

If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.

It is acceptable to destroy material of low intrinsic significance (duplicate mass-produced articles or common specimens which lack significant provenance) where no alternative method of disposal can be found.

Destruction is also an acceptable method of disposal in cases where an object is in extremely poor condition, has high associated health and safety risks or is part of an approved destructive testing request identified in an organisation's research policy.

Where necessary, specialist advice will be sought to establish the appropriate method of destruction. Health and safety risk assessments will be carried out by trained staff where required.

The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, eg. the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.

04.09 Disposal of human remains

The disposal of human remains from museums in England, Northern Ireland and Wales will follow the procedures in the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums'.

04.10 Documenting disposals

All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the SPECNUM primary Procedures on disposal.

All object history records and database records for objects which have been disposed of will be retained in perpetuity as part of the museum archive alongside the full record of the disposal process.

05. Agricultural Collections

05.01 Rationale for collecting

Acton Scott Historic Working Farm Museum, its maintenance and its interpretation has been, and remains, the focus for the development of the Agricultural Collection. Shropshire's agricultural heritage is also an important part of the story of Shropshire and as such is well represented within our collections beyond the core themes and time period represented at Acton Scott.

05.02 Collection history

In 1974 Shropshire Museums took on the management of Acton Scott Historic Working Farm and has since developed a collection of agricultural items including horse drawn equipment and vehicles. The agricultural collection has been both gifted by and purchased from a range of depositors, many of whom are local. As the scale of the collection developed beyond the storage capacity on site at Acton Scott an off-site store was established to accommodate reserve collection items.

In 2005 a major rationalisation of the collection was undertaken and the size of the collection significantly reduced. A further round of rationalisation was started in 2016 with the support of the Expert Eye Programme and has identified a number of items for disposal to reduce holdings further.

05.03 Current holdings and key items

These include an important collection of hand tools (especially wheel-wrighting and blacksmithing tools), implements, feed processing machinery, and vehicles and machinery relating to horse-drawn husbandry. There are significant large-scale individual artefacts including two restored threshing boxes and a working forge. Acton Scott also holds a collection of domestic artefacts relating to the cottage economy.

A list of key items which must be maintained as part of the lease at Acton Historic Working Farm is forms a key group of items. Several locally produced machines and horse drawn vehicles are very rare examples and therefore regionally significant.

05.04 Size and significance

The Agricultural Collection consists of approximately 2,200 objects and equates to less than 1% of the overall Museum Collection in our care. Approximately 50% are of regional significance and 50% are of local significance.

05.05 Condition of collection

The majority of the collection is in a fair condition. However some items are in a poor condition due to pest damage and poor storage conditions on site. New approaches to remedial and preventative conservation will be explored over the period of this policy.

05.06 Collection rationalisation and disposal

Within the period of the policy Shropshire Museums will need to dispose of its off-site store as part of the team's Savings Plan. This will require the disposal of items selected and peer reviewed in 2016 to reduce the size of the collection. Should the opportunity for funding present itself, Shropshire Museums would undertake the same review process for its hand tool collection.

Shropshire Museums is still working to complete the existing documentation backlog. As each artefact is accessioned into the permanent collection it is examined to see if it falls within our Agricultural Collecting Policy. Material that falls within the Collecting Policy is then researched to establish ownership. If ownership is unclear, the collector or depositor will be contacted and asked to confirm in writing that the objects have been donated to the museum. If they are unwilling to make this commitment, they should be asked to remove the material from the store at their own expense.

Non-accessioned material with good documentation that fits the collecting policy will be considered for accessioning. Otherwise it is treated as follows:

- Material that falls outside the policy will be considered for educational use, but must be considered disposable within this category.
- Material that does not have any supporting information is identified and assessed to see if it has any future value within the collection or as an educational resource.
- Objects that fall outside any of the above criteria will be disposed of. Objects that have already been accessioned are legally owned by Shropshire Council and can only be disposed under the strict procedure laid down in the Disposal Policy above.

05.07 Expertise and advice

Shropshire Museums has no professional staff with specialist knowledge of agricultural collections. Our trained wheelwright with extensive experience of caring for and restoring agricultural collections is due to retire during the period of this policy as is unlikely to be replaced.

05.08 Approach to and management of active collecting

Shropshire Museums will not actively collect any additional farming equipment except where replacements are needed for items in the working collection in order to comply with Acton Scott's current lease arrangements.

Items which have a national significance and a strong Shropshire context will be considered only where no alternative institution will accept the item.

05.09 Future themes and priorities for collecting

Shropshire Museums will not actively collect agricultural material within the period of this policy.

Shropshire Museums will continue to periodically review the use and status of objects in the accessioned collection. Any recommended change will be approved by Cabinet when this Policy is next reviewed.

05.10 Development of handling collection

As part of the rationalisation process items from the hand tools collection will be identified to form part of a working and handling collection.

05.11 Collection storage

It is envisaged that the need for an off-site store for large objects and vehicles will be eliminated during the period of this policy through selective disposal. It is envisaged that at the end of this process available storage space for this collection will remain at capacity. There are no current plans to increase storage capacity.

05.12 Documentation standards and procedures

To date less than 1% of the collection has been catalogued and entered onto the collection management database. This equates to a backlog of 33 days cataloguing.

A significant body of work is needed to photograph the collection and revise catalogue entries to make the collection accessible on-line. Documentation of this collection is seen as a priority to support the rationalisation process necessary to decrease storage requirements. Therefore external resources will be sought to support documentation as part of the disposal process.

05.13 Legal requirements

There are no legal requirements associated with this collection.

05.14 Collection display and interpretation

Agricultural collection items are displayed mainly at Acton Scott Historic Working Farm. However, smaller items such as hand tools are displayed at Much Wenlock Museum and periodically at Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery.

Objects are assessed and any necessary conservation work undertaken prior to open display at Acton Scott Historic Working Farm. Only those objects identified in their care plans as permitted to be worked, are worked on site. Every object to be worked has an operating statement, and is worked only in accordance with that statement. Appropriate training is provided to all who operate working objects.

05.15 Collecting policies for other museums

The Museum Service will take into account the collecting policies of neighbouring museums and will consult with these services to avoid conflicts of interest, duplication of effort and wasting resources.

Museum / Museum Service	Collecting Area	Scope
Attingham Park Home Farm	Unknown	Historically collected items and a working collection which reflect life on a Shropshire Home Farm.
Clun Local History Museum	Clun and surrounding parishes	Actively collecting hand implements and smaller artefacts.
House on Crutches Museum	Bishop's Castle and surrounding parishes	Actively collecting hand implements and smaller artefacts.
Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust	Ironbridge Gorge, East Shropshire Coalfield	Historically collected items and a working collection which reflect life on a Shropshire Farm.
Northgate Museum	Bridgnorth and surrounding parishes	Actively collecting hand implements and smaller artefacts.
Oswestry Town Museum	Oswestry and surrounding parishes	Actively collecting hand implements and smaller artefacts.
Shugborough Museum	Staffordshire	Historically collected items and a working collection which reflect life on a Staffordshire Home Farm.
The Story of Drayton Museum	Market Drayton and surrounding parishes	Actively collecting hand implements and smaller items of farm machinery.

06. Archaeology Collection

Key Collection

06.01 Rationale for collecting

The Archaeology Collection reflects more than 10,000 years of human activity in the county, from the first stone tools to the relics of Shropshire's industrial past. For 80% of this time span the only evidence of human activity is from archaeological finds. This material is the foundation for our understanding and for promoting an appreciation of how people have lived and worked here over the millennia.

Shropshire Museums is the only repository for Archaeology Archives with Shropshire, providing for the statutory requirement upon Archaeological Contractors to deposit the material generated whilst undertaking fieldwork as part of a planning consent. The deposition of archaeology project archives remains the most active area of collecting for Shropshire Museums and the greatest demand upon the service for increasing storage.

06.02 Collection history

Elements of the archaeology collection form part of the early museum collections of Ludlow and Shrewsbury. These collections have been added to over the many decades and most substantially so since planning policy was revised in 1997 making archaeological investigations a statutory requirement in areas of potential historic interest.

The current archaeology collection is made up of assemblages and single chance finds. The vast majority of the collection has been acquired through donation although significant items have been purchased mainly through Treasure Trove and the Treasure Act 1997.

06.03 Current holdings and key items

Prehistory: The Prehistoric past of the county is represented by stone tools, metalwork and pottery. Early Prehistory and the Iron Age are poorly represented although significant finds have been acquired in recent years such as the Port-Y-Waen Palaeolithic Harpoon and Iron Age Spoons. Significant items include a large and important collection of Bronze Age metalwork and material from excavations such as Bromfield Bronze Age Cemetery.

Roman: The Roman collection comprises mainly of ceramics and building materials. There is a small collection of metalwork. Significant collections include material from excavations at the Roman towns of Wroxeter, Leintwardine and Whitchurch. Key items within the collection include specific single finds such as the Wroxeter Roman Mirror, Hadrianic inscription and Wroxeter tombstones.

Medieval: The Medieval collection is represented by a narrow range of material, principally ceramics such as decorated floor tiles. Metalwork and certain other classes of object are underrepresented. Most of the items are Later Medieval in date with very few Early Medieval finds. Significant items include the finds from Shrewsbury Abbey and Bridgnorth Friary. Other significant chance finds such as the Dinham Pommel and North Shropshire Pendant are of regional importance.

Post-Medieval: There is a small collection of Post-Medieval material comprising mainly of ceramics and metalwork. Most of this is of poor quality. This is mainly due to the lack of urban development within the county's historic towns.

Foreign: There are a small number of artefacts from foreign sources including some Egyptian finds, Roman artefacts and Greek coins. The majority of this material has been transferred to other institutions and a small reference collection retained for educational purposes.

Human Remains: Shropshire Museums holds a small collection of human remains which mainly relate to Archaeology Project Archives. However a small number of personal relics such as locks of hair are also represented. The exact number is uncertain (a full audit of collections is currently underway) but would be estimated at less than 50 individuals. Of these the majority are Roman and Prehistoric cremations from excavations carried out between 1950 and 1990. Others are chance finds which were donated to our museums in their early years (C19th to mid C20th).

06.04 Size and significance

The Archaeology Collection consists of approximately 119,500 objects and equates to 42% of the overall Museum Collection in our care. Approximately 40% of the collection is of national importance and 40% of regional significance. The remaining 20% is of local significance and is mainly archaeology project archives.

The size and significance of the collection means that Shropshire Museums will work towards preparing collection data to ultimately support an application for ACE Designation for the collection over the next five years. This will involve support from volunteer researchers and external specialists.

06.05 Condition of collection

The collection is mainly in fair condition although some remedial conservation is needed to sensitive items such as ironwork. An assessment of the condition of the collection has been undertaken by a conservator in the last five years. Conservation of key items in need of remedial treatment will be undertaken as part of the preparations for the new Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery displays.

06.06 Collection rationalisation and disposal

Shropshire Museums is still working to complete the existing documentation backlog and to rationalise or dispose of historic archives which were not addressed under the Deposition Standards for Archaeology Archives. As each artefact is accessioned into the permanent collection it is examined to see if it falls within our Archaeology Collecting Policy. Material that falls within the Collecting Policy is then researched to establish ownership. If ownership is unclear, the collector or depositor will be contacted and asked to confirm in writing that the specimens have been donated to the museum. If they are unwilling to make this commitment, they should be asked to remove the material from the store at their own expense.

Non-accessioned material with good documentation that fits the collecting policy will be considered for accessioning. Otherwise it is treated as follows:

- Material that falls outside the policy will be considered for educational use, but must be considered disposable within this category.
- Material that does not have any supporting information is identified and assessed to see if it has any future value within the collection or as an educational resource.
- Specimens that fall outside any of the above criteria will be disposed of. Specimens that have already been accessioned are legally owned by Shropshire Council and can only be disposed under the strict procedure laid down in the Disposal Policy above

The disposal of human remains from museums in England, Northern Ireland and Wales will follow the procedures in the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums'.

06.07 Expertise and advice

Shropshire Museums has one member of staff with archaeological expertise. The Team Leader, Collections and Curatorial Services is a qualified archaeologist with extensive experience of managing archaeology collections.

06.08 Approach to and management of active collecting

Shropshire Museums Archaeology Collection will accept chance finds from within its collecting area where:

- An accurate findspot can be provided or where the object itself is of regional significance.
- The object/s have not been removed illegally
- The historic importance to the locality of an item outweighs any conservation costs.

Shropshire Museums will only seek to purchase material for the Archaeology Collection where an assessment of the item suggests that:

- It has been obtained legally and that title to the object clearly rests with the vendor
- The object/s are of major significance to the archaeology of the County
- An independent valuation of the item/s has been carried out and agreed with the vendor
- Where there is a public desire for that item/s to be collected on their behalf

Certain items come in as material generated from archaeological excavations carried out by developers prior to new builds or adaptations of current buildings. Shropshire Museums is prepared to accept material from archaeological fieldwork provided our deposition conditions are met. These are laid out in our Deposition Standards for Archaeological Archives. We ensure that all such Archaeology Project Archives are rationalised prior to deposition to reduce our storage needs and packed to curatorial standards.

06.09 Future priorities for collecting

There are a number of significant gaps in the current Archaeology Collection. These reflect a lack of objects from certain periods and localities. Districts which have historically been home one of our museums with an archaeological display (South Shropshire and Bridgnorth) are best represented in the collection. In these districts people can relate to Shropshire Museums and are more willing to donate artefacts.

Shropshire Museums will seek to improve the Archaeology Collection through managed acquisition by actively acquiring material and information that:

- will enhance the existing archaeology collection
- can be acquired for posterity and with title
- is suitable for long term retention.

Prehistory: Shropshire Museums already has a large Prehistory Collection (approx. 43% of all archaeological objects). However we will work to acquire material which relates to underrepresented periods, especially the Mesolithic and Iron Age. We will also seek to address the geographical bias by actively collecting items from North Shropshire. The quality, size and scope of the collection mean that it has the potential to be developed towards obtaining Designated Status. Therefore, the development of this collection will be seen as a priority.

Roman: Shropshire Museums has large collections of roman finds from known Roman sites. We will work to acquire more chance finds from little known sites around the County. We will also seek to address the geographical bias by actively collecting items from North Shropshire. The quality, size and scope of the collection mean that it has the potential to be developed towards obtaining Designated status. Therefore, the development of this collection will be seen as a priority.

Medieval: Only 12% of the current archaeology collection dates from the medieval period. Shropshire Museums will work to increase the number of medieval finds within the collection, especially from the Early Medieval period which is poorly represented. We will also seek to address the geographical bias by actively collecting items from North Shropshire.

Post Medieval: Shropshire Museums will continue to collect post medieval material, in particular items relating to the County's industrial past. We will also seek to address the geographical bias by actively collecting items from North Shropshire and avoiding duplication with Ironbridge Gorge.

Shropshire Museums will continue to periodically review the use and status of objects in the accessioned collection. Any recommended change will be approved by Cabinet when this Policy is next reviewed.

06.10 Development of handling collection

Shropshire Museums has been actively developing a representative collection of original material and replicas for hands-on activities. At present the collection is small and consists mainly of ceramics but has been sorted and inventoried.

Shropshire Museums will continue to identify both real artefacts and replica objects which will improve the archaeology handling collection. Specific items and collections will be sourced and added to the collection for specific projects, exhibitions and events.

06.11 Collection storage

The archaeology collection is currently held at Ludlow Museum Resource Centre (which meets the MGC Guidelines for archaeological material) and Hortonwood Archive Store.

During the next five years Shropshire Museums plans to refit the existing storage area at the Museum Resource Centre and rebox the collection to aid access and object location.

The Museum Service has accepted archaeology archives since its creation in 1974. However since archaeological investigation were made a regular part of development work in 1990 the quantity of material deposited has increased year on year.

In 2007 national standards for archaeology archive deposition were produced by the Archaeology Archives Forum which set collecting standards for museums in light of the national problem facing archaeology archive depositories. Archaeology Units depositing material with the Museum Service are expected to meet these standards or a charge is made to cover the resources needed to bring the archive up to this standard.

The collecting of Archaeology Project Archives is the one area that Shropshire Museums has limited control over what they collect and when. They are in many respects passive receivers of material from Archaeology Units undertaking archaeology projects in relation to planning conditions set out under Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5). This means the Service has little control over the amount of material they receive or the quality of the archive that reaches them.

As the collection has grown significantly since 1997 it has outstripped available storage and curatorial resources. As a result, large archival holdings are currently inaccessible. A fee for the deposition of archaeological archives has been extended to help fund improvements.

During the period of this policy Shropshire Museums will review whether it has the future capacity to continue to collect material from the Telford and Wrekin local authority area.

At present we have no designated area for storing human remains. However, during the period of this policy Shropshire Museums plans to develop a dedicated Archaeology Store on the mezzanine floor at the Museum Resource Centre subject to external funding. This will assist with improvements to access to the collection and improve the curation of this resource.

The current off-site store at Hortonwood may be reviewed during period of this policy as part of Shropshire Council's savings plans. The future storage requirements of the archaeology collection have been assessed and work is on-going to identify a suitable alternative permanent store for bulk archaeology.

It is envisaged that at the end of this process available storage space for this collection will, as is currently the case, remain at capacity. There are no current plans to increase storage capacity.

06.12 Documentation standards and procedures

To date 11% of the collection has been catalogued and entered onto the collection management database. This equates to a backlog of 1773 days cataloguing.

A significant body of work is needed to photograph the collection and revise catalogue entries to make the collection accessible on-line. However, the documentation backlog is unlikely to be address under the period of the current policy due to a lack of resources, namely staff time.

Almost all human remains within Archaeology project Archives will have paper records associated with them giving a well-documented context and history. Those with no contextual data or provenance are identified for disposal or limited educational use. All human remains which have

been catalogued are marked as such on Shropshire Museums' Collections Management Database. This also states whether or not they fall under the Human Tissue Act 2004.

06.13 Legal requirements

The museum will not acquire archaeological material (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the governing body or responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures.

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland the procedures include reporting finds to the landowner or occupier of the land and to the proper authorities in the case of possible treasure as defined by the Treasure Act 1996 (as amended by the coroners and Justice Act 2009).

Any exceptions to the above statement will only be because the museum is:

- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin;
- or acquiring an item of minor importance that lacks secure ownership history but in the best judgement of experts in the field concerned has not been illicitly traded;
- or acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin;
- in possession of reliable documentary evidence that the item was exported from its country of origin before 1970.

In these cases the museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

As the museum holds or intends to acquire human remains under 100 years old, it will obtain the necessary licence under the Human Tissue Act 2004 and any subordinate legislation from time to time in force.

As the museum holds or intends to acquire human remains from any period, it will follow the procedures in the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums' issued by DCMS in 2005.

Shropshire Museums carried out an assessment of its Human Remains in 2015. All items were identified as exempt. A separate Human Remains Policy is in place to ensure that all future collecting complies with current legislation. This policy will be reviewed next in 2020.

06.14 Collection display and interpretation

Archaeology collection items are on display at Ludlow Museum, Much Wenlock Museum and Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery. Items are also on long term loan to Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre, Oswestry Town Museum, Oswestry Library, Whitchurch Heritage Centre and Powysland Museum.

A separate Human Remains Policy is in place which outlines Shropshire Museums' approach to the display and interpretation of human remains.

06.15 Collecting policies for other museums

Shropshire Museums will take into account the collecting policies of neighbouring Museums and will consult with these services to avoid conflicts of interest, duplication of effort and wasting resources:

Museum / Museum Service	Collecting Area	Scope
Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery	Regional	Chance finds
British Museum	National	Chance Finds of national significance.
Clun Local History Museum	Clun and surrounding parishes	Actively collecting chance finds
Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust	Ironbridge Gorge, East Shropshire Coalfield	Actively collecting industrial archaeology
Herefordshire Heritage Services	Herefordshire	Representative of all periods and cultures found in Herefordshire.
House on Crutches Museum Collection Trust	Bishop's Castle & Surrounding parishes	Chance finds
National Museum and Gallery of Wales	National and Welsh borders	Chance finds
Northgate Museum	Bridgnorth Town & surrounding parishes	Actively collecting chance finds
Oswestry Heritage Centre	Oswestry Town and surrounding parishes	Chance finds
The Story of Drayton Museum	Market Drayton and surrounding parishes	Actively collecting chance finds
Wroxeter Roman Site & Museum	Wroxeter Parish	Chance finds & archaeology project archives

7. The Archive and Photographic Collections

07.01 Rationale for collecting

Our written and printed records are a vital source of historic information. Photographs, letters, newspapers and other ephemera can give a unique insight into the history of Shropshire and the lives of its inhabitants. In many ways our archive collections can be seen as parts of Shropshire's collective memory.

The main repository for archives relating to the county is Shropshire Archives based in Shrewsbury. Therefore, Shropshire Museums will ensure that the Collecting Policy of the Shropshire Archives is taken into consideration when acquiring archive material and give precedence to Shropshire Archives when acquiring material.

07.02 Collection history

The majority of the archive holdings have been acquired between 1974 and 2009 by Shropshire County Museum Service and Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery. The vast majority of the collection has been acquired through donation.

07.03 Current Holdings and key items

Shropshire Museums holds a collection of around 9,000 images primarily of topographical views of south Shropshire, townscapes, special events, civic occasions etc. Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery holds an extensive collection of magic lantern slides. At Acton Scott there is a small collection of images relating to agriculture and Country crafts.

Shropshire Museums also holds a collection of some 14,000 original manuscripts, typescripts, diaries, notebooks, maps, illustrations, diagrams, annotated books, water-colours, photographs, printed ephemera and appropriate original electronic data and other similar items relating to its collections and the towns of Ludlow, Much Wenlock and Shrewsbury.

The majority of the items in this collection are of local interest. Some of the archive material relating to agricultural history is of national interest. However, most of the significant material has been transferred to Shropshire Archives as part of a continuing programme of rationalisation.

07.04 Size and significance

The Archive Collection consists of approximately 14,500 objects and equates to less than 1% of the overall Museum Collection in our care. Approximately 50% of the collection is of national importance and 40% of regional significance. The remaining 10% is of local significance.

07.05 Condition of collection

On the whole the condition of the collection is fair. Work is underway to digitise material to reduce the need for public access to original copies and to allow original records to be transferred to Shropshire Archives.

07.06 Collection rationalisation and disposal

Shropshire Museums is still working to complete the existing documentation backlog. As each artefact is accessioned into the permanent collection it is examined to see if it falls within our Archive Collecting Policy. Material that falls within the Collecting Policy is then researched to establish ownership. If ownership is unclear, the collector or depositor will be contacted and asked to confirm in writing that the documents have been donated to the museum. If they are unwilling to make this commitment, they should be asked to remove the material from the store at their own expense.

Non-accessioned material with good documentation is treated as follows:

- Material which falls under the Shropshire Archives collecting policy and does not complement our existing collections will be offered to Shropshire Archives.
- Material that falls outside both collecting policies will be considered for educational use, but must be considered disposable within this category.
- Documents that fall outside any of the above criteria and our Collecting Policy will be disposed of. Documents that have already been accessioned are legally owned by Shropshire Council and can only be disposed under the strict procedure laid down in the Disposal Policy above

07.07 Expertise and advice

Shropshire Museum does not have an archivist but has access to professional expertise within Shropshire Archives. A member of the Shropshire Archives staff attends Curatorial Board meetings to provide advice on the management of this aspect of the collection.

07.08 Approach to and management of active collecting

Shropshire Museums has consulted with the staff from the Shropshire Archives and have established that there is an approximately 30% overlap with the photographic collection held at Shropshire Archives. Since Ludlow material in particular is regularly consulted locally, this collection will continue to be held in Ludlow.

Shropshire Museums will primarily act as a facilitator to support oral history initiatives by other groups in the county. This role is particularly significant with respect to support for reminiscence therapy initiatives where memories will be collected.

We will also continue to collect photographs of events, people, activities, buildings and views, both contemporary and historic where appropriate. However, we will continue to work towards a shared store with Shropshire Archives and the subsequent rationalisation and merger of our photographic collections. Photocopies and other facsimiles will be acquired in lieu of relevant original material held elsewhere.

Shropshire Museums will continue to periodically review the use and status of objects in the accessioned collection. Any recommended change will be approved by Cabinet when this Policy is next reviewed.

07.09 Future priorities for collecting

Shropshire Museums will principally collect images which relate to artefacts or specimens acquired by us and which form part of their history files or supporting documentation. In particular archive material relating to:

- The geology, botany and zoology of the Shropshire region.
- The archaeology of historic Shropshire.
- Collectors, geologists, botanists, zoologists, naturalists, taxidermists and natural history societies, past and present with Shropshire and museum collection connections.

All other material will be directed to Shropshire Archives.

Shropshire Museums will continue to work closely with Shropshire Archives to collect and identify images of historic Shropshire's agriculture and craft skills. There is clear need to collect and annotate this material before provenance is lost with a passing generation.

Shropshire Museums will work closely with Shropshire Archives to collect and identify images of historic Shropshire's industry and manufacturing companies.

Shropshire Museums will continue to work closely with the Library Service to unify and rationalise the various locally held collections.

Shropshire Museums will preserve archive material generated by us which will document the development of the museum service.

07.10 Development of handling collection

In most cases, material will be digitised and copied for handling.

07.11 Collection storage

Archival material specific to our collections will be stored at the Ludlow Museum Resource Centre and Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery. Historic archival material will be held primarily at Ludlow Museum Resource Centre.

At present, the available storage space for this collection is at capacity. There are no current plans to increase storage capacity.

07.12 Documentation standards and procedures

As Shropshire Museums holds archives, including photographs and printed ephemera, its governing body will be guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom (3rd ed., 2002). It will also seek to meet the 2004 Standards for Records Repositories.

To date less than 1% of the collection has been catalogued and entered onto the collection management database. This equates to a backlog of 231 days cataloguing.

A significant body of work is needed to photograph the collection and revise catalogue entries to make the collection accessible on-line. However, the documentation backlog is unlikely to be addressed under the period of the current policy due to a lack of resources, namely staff time.

07.13 Legal requirements

There are no legal requirements associated with this collection.

07.14 Collection display and interpretation

Archival material will not be placed on long term display without advice from Shropshire Archives. However archival material is a key interpretive resource and so alternative methods of display such as electronic and reproduction will be used wherever appropriate.

07.15 Collecting policies for other museums

The Museum Service will take into account the collecting policies of neighbouring museums and will consult with these services to avoid conflicts of interest, duplication of effort and wasting resources.

Museum / Museum Service	Collecting Area	Scope
Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital	Nationwide	Actively collecting material associated with orthopaedic history.
Assault Glider Trust	Worldwide	Actively collecting material associated with Assault Glider Corp.
Bishop's Castle Railway Museum	Items associated with the railway in Bishop's Castle and surrounding parishes.	Actively collecting material.
Boscobel House	Items associated with the property and estate.	Actively collecting material.
Clun Local History Museum	Clun and surrounding parishes.	Actively collecting material.
House on Crutches Museum	Bishop's Castle and surrounding parishes.	Actively collecting material.
Shropshire Archives	Shropshire.	Repository for Shropshire with presidency for acquisition.
Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust	Ironbridge Gorge, East Shropshire Coalfield	Actively collecting material associated with industrial and social heritage of the Gorge.
Lady Forester's Nursing Home Museum	Much Wenlock	Actively collecting material associated with Lady Forester's Nursing Home.

Market Drayton Museum	Market Drayton and surround parishes	Actively collecting material.
Mythstories Museum	National	Actively collecting material associated with storytelling tradition.
National Gymnastics Association	Nationwide	Actively collecting material associated with National Gymnastic Association.
Northgate Museum	Bridgnorth and surrounding parishes.	Actively collecting material.
Oswestry Railway Museum	Oswestry to Shrewsbury	Material relating to Cambrian Railway
Oswestry Railway Museum	Nationwide	Actively collecting material associated with Cambrian Railway.
Oswestry Town Museum	Oswestry and surrounding parishes	Actively collecting material.
Oswestry Town Council	Oswestry and surrounding parishes	Actively collecting material associated with Borough and Town records.
Royal Air Force Museum	Worldwide	Actively collecting material associated with history of RAF
Severn Valley Railway	National	Actively collecting material associated with Severn Valley Railway
Wenlock Olympian Society	Much Wenlock	Actively collecting material.
The Story of Drayton Museum	Market Drayton and surrounding parishes	Actively collecting material.
Shropshire Regimental Museum	Nationwide	Actively collecting material associated with Shropshire Regiments and British Army.
Wartime Aircraft Recovery Museum	Nationwide	Actively collecting material associated with aircraft crash sites in Shropshire, Cheshire, Staffordshire and Welsh Borders.
Welsh Guards Museum	Nationwide	Welsh Guards related
Wenlock Olympian Society	Nationwide	Actively collecting material associated with Wenlock Olympian Society and National Olympian Society.

08. Biology Collection

08.01 Rationale for collecting

The Natural History collections contain plants and animals collected from both Shropshire and further afield by people associated with the County. This collection is a remarkable record of the flora and fauna of Shropshire both today and in years past.

08.02 Collection history

Many of the items within the biology collection formed part of the early collections of Ludlow Museum, Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery and Whitchurch Museum. These have been added to over the past 40 years mainly through the acquisition of private historic collections.

08.03 Current holdings

Shropshire Museums' Natural History collections comprise some 77,000 specimens of fungi, plants, invertebrates and vertebrates currently stored in Ludlow at the Museum Resource Centre. Shropshire Museums holds around 200,000 biological records of living species.

The collection includes a number of specimens which represent species now extinct within Shropshire, nationally or worldwide. Most significant among these are taxidermy specimens of extinct animals including a Passenger Pigeon.

Entomology: Around 75% of the museum collection is composed of entomology specimens, pinned in purpose built cabinets and store boxes and most collected from the Welsh border region.

Molluscs: A further 20% of the collection consists of a very good collection of British and some foreign molluscs, including the collection of the Reverend Egerton.

Invertebrates: There is a small collection of dried invertebrates such as corals, bryozoans, crustacea and arachnids.

Fluid Collection: The fluid collection consists of fewer than 600 jars of fungi, plants, invertebrates, and vertebrates, including a collection of fish from the River Teme. This collection has been assessed, substantially rationalised and rebottled in the last five years.

Herbarium: There is a small higher plant herbarium of around 3,000 mounted specimens and one bound volume. A good collection of British bryophytes, mainly from Shropshire localities has also been donated.

Fungi: There is a good representative collection of both macro-fungi and micro-fungi.

Botany: A small collection of economic botanical specimens including cones and wood samples.

Bird eggs: There is a significant collection of bird's eggs and nests.

Vertebrates: The vertebrate collection consists of around 55 glass fronted cases, many of which originated from Whitchurch Museum, approximately 500 mounted birds and around 100 mounted mammals.

Osteology: There is also a small osteology collection of approximately 300 specimens.

Comparative biological material: many of the more exotic items in the biological collections were collected for the purposes of forming comparisons between living species and fossils, for example Pearly Nautilus for comparison with fossil cephalopod specimens, dog fish for comparison with early fossil fish.

Biological archive: the museum service holds a substantial collection of specialist and historic biological reference books, these books form a regularly consulted collection resource.

08.04 Size and significance

The Biology Collection consists of approximately 60,000 objects and equates to 21% of the overall Museum Collection in our care. Approximately 50% of the collection is of national importance and 40% of regional significance. The remaining 10% is of local significance.

08.05 Condition of collection

The condition is on the whole in fair condition. Some organic material which has been in storage at Rowley's House has suffered some pest damage and has been frozen and moved to Ludlow Museum Resource Centre. A significant amount of volunteer led research and replacing of the collection has been undertaken in recent years resulting in a well order and documented collection.

08.06 Collection rationalisation and disposal

Over the past twenty years the natural history collections have been significantly rationalised. This procedure has been, and continues to be carried out as follows:

Material is examined to see if it falls within the Museum Service's Biology Collecting Policy. Material that falls within the Collecting Policy is then researched to establish ownership. If ownership is unclear, the collector or depositor will be contacted and asked to confirm in writing that the specimens have been donated to the museum. If they are unwilling to make this commitment, they should be asked to remove the material from the store at their own expense.

Non-accessioned material with good documentation that fits the collecting policy will be considered for accessioning. Otherwise it is treated as follows:

- Material that falls outside the policy will be considered for educational use, but must be considered disposable within this category.
- Material that does not have any additional information should be identified and assessed to see if it has any future value within the collection or as an educational resource.

Specimens that fall outside any of the above criteria will be disposed of. Specimens that have already been accessioned are legally owned by Shropshire Council and can only be disposed under the strict procedure laid down in the Disposal Policy above.

08.07 Expertise and advice

Shropshire Museums employs one trainee Curator of Natural Sciences based at the Museum Resource Centre.

08.08 Approach to and management of active collecting

So far as biological material is concerned Shropshire Museums will not acquire by any direct or indirect means any specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

Shropshire Museums will not actively collect biological material within the period of this policy beyond the exceptions listed below.

Any exceptions to the above statement will only be because the museum is either:

- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin;
- or acquiring an item of minor importance that lacks secure ownership history but in the best judgement of experts in the field concerned has not been illicitly traded;
- or acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin;
- or in possession of reliable documentary evidence that the item was exported from its country of origin before 1970.

In these cases the museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

Shropshire Museums, whilst complying with the relevant legislation, will seek to acquire biological specimens and associated material by gift, bequest, and purchase. Specimens may also be collected by staff field work and contracted field work.

08.09 Future priorities for collecting

Shropshire Museums will not actively collect any biology. However offers of donations will be considered where they address:

- Collection gaps in the flora and fauna of Shropshire and the adjacent areas of the Welsh Border counties of Hereford, Worcester and Powys.
- A concise reference collection of British fauna, this will be achieved by filling gaps in existing collections.
- Material that can be used to compare living species with fossils.
- Voucher specimens in support of Biological Records for the whole of Shropshire.
- Handling material for loans, hands-on and educational sessions, in line with identified needs.

Shropshire Museums will continue to periodically review the use and status of objects in the accessioned collection. Any recommended change will be approved by the governing body/management cabinet.

Botany: Shropshire Museums will continue to collect representative specimens of Shropshire flora. Non-county specimens with historic local connections will also be collected. Non-county or foreign specimens will only be acquired for specific purposes such as comparison with fossil plants, exhibitions, handling and education and for the identification of difficult taxa.

Invertebrate zoology: The collections will be developed to provide a concise reference series of British species by filling gaps in the current collections. Where possible, this will be achieved using local specimens, otherwise non-local British material will be used. Additional named voucher specimens supporting Shropshire biological records will be acquired in reasonable numbers for future confirmation of taxonomic changes. A small reference collection of a limited number of foreign species will be maintained for identification purposes, for example cockroaches, timber beetles and species likely to be accidentally imported. Non-British material with local historical associations will be acquired. Other non-British material will only be acquired for specific purposes such as displays, exhibitions, education, handling etc.

Vertebrate zoology : Specimens of special significance to the local region, e.g. county rarities or taxonomically difficult groups, and a series of voucher specimens will be pro-actively acquired and prepared in the most appropriate form for future use - for example study skin/ skeleton, mount, freeze dried specimen, fluid preserved or deep frozen. The deep frozen collections will continue to be regarded as a biological resource in their own right and as a temporary store for specimens pending further treatment. Provenanced historical specimens, former Ludlow Natural History Society items and good examples of work by historic local taxidermists will also be acquired, such as the John Rocke collection. Non-European material will only be acquired for specific purposes such as display, comparisons with other collections and education.

Birds' eggs: Well provenanced local egg collections are an irreplaceable and proven biological resource and will be accepted into the collections. A small number of exotic species such as emu and ostrich will be accepted for display and educational use.

Osteology: A reference collection of British birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians and fish (including wild, domestic and alien species) will be developed. Whole disarticulated specimens will be preferred, with a limited collection of articulated skeletons for educational or display purposes. Osteology study collections will be used as comparative reference specimens to assist the identification of fossil, sub-fossil, archaeological and contemporary zoological material. Exotic foreign species with no relevance to British faunas will be selectively acquired for display purposes, hands on activities and for comparison with fossil material.

Shropshire Museums will continue to periodically review the use and status of objects in the accessioned collection. Any recommended change will be approved by Cabinet when this Policy is next reviewed.

08.10 Development of handling collection

Botany: An agreement has been reached with the Shropshire Flora Group that voucher specimens for Shropshire will be received by the museum. Active collecting of new botanical material will only take place on a small scale, the collection has benefited from the curatorial work of a specialist volunteer. Passive collection will include the acquisition of suitable local herbaria, particularly voucher specimens supporting Shropshire biological records and named reference specimens to

assist with the identification of difficult taxa, e.g. lichens, bryophytes, fungi, algae and critical groups of vascular plants.

Vertebrate zoology: Local and British specimens will be acquired either as mounts or fresh corpses of animals that have died by legitimate means, for example road casualties, old age etc. Corpses will only be accepted if sufficient examples do not already exist in the reference or handling collections.

Birds' eggs: Legally collected local egg collections will be accepted into the collections with the correct documentation. Shoe-box type collections with no data will be refused after careful checking. Collections seized by the police can be accepted after clearance from the Department of the Environment.

08.11 Collection storage

The natural history collection will be held at the Museum Resource Centre where MCG Guidelines can be met.

At present, the available storage space for this collection is almost at capacity. There are no current plans to increase storage capacity.

08.12 Documentation standards and procedures

To date 25% of the collection has been catalogued and entered onto the collection management database. This equates to a backlog of 699 days cataloguing.

A significant body of work is needed to photograph the collection and revise catalogue entries to make the collection accessible on-line. However, the documentation backlog is unlikely to be addressed under the period of the current policy due to a lack of resources, namely staff time.

08.13 Legal requirements

A full list of all endangered and protected species specimens will be developed during the course of this policy to ensure all current legislation regarding storage and display, including the CITES conversion, is being adequately addressed.

08.14 Collection display and interpretation

Biology collection items are on display at Much Wenlock Museum and Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery.

08.15 Collecting policies for other museums

Shropshire Museums will take into account the collecting policies of neighbouring Museums and will consult with these services to avoid conflicts of interest, duplication of effort and wasting resources.

Museum / Museum Service	Collecting Area	Scope
Boscobel House	The house and estate	Historically collected.
Clun Local History Museum	Clun and surrounding parishes	Actively collecting material
Herefordshire Heritage Services	Herefordshire	Voucher specimens of all extant species within the county.
House on Crutches Museum	Bishop's Castle and Surrounding Area	Actively collecting material
National Museum and Gallery of Wales	National and Welsh borders	Actively collecting items of national significance.
Natural History Museum	Nationwide	Actively collecting items of national significance.
Northgate Museum	Bishop's Castle and surrounding area	Actively collecting material.
Oswestry Town Museum	Oswestry and surrounding parishes	Actively collecting material

09. Costume Collection

09.01 Rationale for collecting

Shropshire Museums collects costume in order to illustrate the clothing worn by Shropshire inhabitants over time. Wherever possible items are collected that have a strong provenance which associates it with a named individual and contextual information about their life.

Shropshire Museums also collects to illustrate the textile products manufactured within the county.

09.02 Collection history

The Costume and Textile Collection has been created from five previous small museum collections and from recent donations. The vast majority of the collection has been acquired through donation. Two notable groups; the Aqualate Hall Collection was donated in 1972 and the Hazel Bailey Collections was purchased following its deposit on loan and as a result of the public appeal for funds in 1987.

09.03 Current holdings and key items

The Costume and Textile Collection contains items dating from 1700 to 1980. It includes over 100 complete dresses, of which eight date from before 1810, and two are particularly important 18th century examples. There are examples of menswear, including a group of agricultural smocks and some 18th and early 19th century decorative waistcoats. There are also good examples of Victorian children's wear, doll's clothes and some samplers.

The collection includes a small number of leather and fur garments and accessories and a group of fans, three constructed of ostrich feathers. There is a good collection of lace and the Kay Kohler Collection of costume, needlework and textiles includes material for many parts of the World.

An 18th century mantua (1710), the Hazledine Wedding Dress (1758), Clive of India's Mayoral Robe (1760) and a Postman's Coat of 1860 are among some important items in the collection.

09.04 Size and significance of the collection

The costume collection consists of around 5,000 items equates to 2% of the overall Museum Collection in our care. Approximately 2% of the collection is of national importance and 30% of regional significance. The remaining 68% is of local significance.

09.05 Condition of collection

The condition of the collection is generally fair to good. However a small number of items are in poor condition and require remedial conservation.

09.06 Collection rationalisation and disposal

As the Shrewsbury Borough Collection are merged with the Shropshire County Collection items of duplication will be identified and recommendations for the rationalisation of the collection will emerge.

Material will be examined to see if it falls within Shropshire Museums' Costume Collecting Policy. Material that falls within the Collecting Policy is then researched to establish ownership. If ownership is unclear, the collector or depositor will be contacted and asked to confirm in writing that the specimens have been donated to the museum. If they are unwilling to make this commitment, they should be asked to remove the material from the store at their own expense.

Non-accessioned material with good documentation that fits the collecting policy will be considered for accessioning. Otherwise it is treated as follows:

- Material that falls outside the policy will be considered for educational use, but must be considered disposable within this category.
- Material that does not have any additional information should be identified and assessed to see if it has any future value within the collection or as an educational resource.

Specimens that fall outside any of the above criteria will be disposed of. Items that have already been accessioned are legally owned by Shropshire Council and can only be disposed under the strict procedure laid down in the Disposal Policy above.

09.07 Expertise and advice

Shropshire Museums has no professional staff with specialist knowledge for costume collections.

In the last five years, the costume collection has had limited specialist intervention including a spot check on the condition of the Shropshire Collection, conservation of key items identified as at risk and a full audit of the Shrewsbury collection.

Therefore research and review of this collection will be undertaken under the guidance of an external subject specialist. Professional advice and recommendations will be sourced as part of any rationalisation process.

09.08 Approach to and management of active collecting

Shropshire Museums will not actively collect costume and textiles within the period of this policy.

09.09 Future priorities for collecting

Shropshire Museums will not actively collect any costume. However offers of donations will be considered where they:

- address key gaps in the collection. In particular men's costume and early costume will be a priority
- items which have a well-documented and clear local provenance and association with a named individual or company.

- Have a national significance and a strong Shropshire context will be considered where no alternative institution will accept the item.

Shropshire Museums will continue to periodically review the use and status of objects in the accessioned collection. Any recommended change will be approved by Cabinet when this Policy is next reviewed.

09.10 Development of handling collection

A substantial handling Collection has already been developed in the last five years to support public access. The merger of the Shrewsbury and Shropshire Collections has created an opportunity to assess our holdings and allocate pieces to the existing Handling Collection.

09.11 Collection storage

The collection is highly vulnerable to light and dust damage, and to attack by insects. It requires a steady temperature and protection from dust and damp. Therefore, the costume is held at Ludlow Museum Resource Centre in the Social History Store where space has been made available. However, at present, the available storage space for this collection is at capacity. There are no current plans to increase storage capacity.

09.12 Documentation standards and procedures

To 90% of the collection has been catalogued and entered onto the collection management database. This equates to a backlog of 8 days cataloguing.

A significant body of work is needed to photograph the collection and revise catalogue entries to make the collection accessible on-line. However, the documentation backlog is unlikely to be addressed under the period of the current policy due to a lack of resources, namely staff time and fees for external consultants.

09.13 Legal requirements

There are no legal requirements associated with this collection.

09.14 Collection display and interpretation

The Costume Collection has proved to be an extremely popular source of inspiration and knowledge for a range of workshops and courses at the Ludlow Museum Resource Centre. Very little costume is displayed at our museum sites outside the costume gallery at Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery. Textiles should not be displayed for lengthy periods due to the damaging effects of long term exposure to light. The display of some costume is a skilled and time-consuming matter and requires a large volume of museum showcase display space, quality figures or other display furniture that is expensive to procure.

Due to the issues surrounding the display of costume it is seen as a priority to make the collection accessible in other ways such as workshops and courses. However, this puts a great deal of strain on costume and noticeable deterioration has occurred to some pieces used for such sessions over the past 5 years. In order to minimise deterioration of key pieces:

- Accessioned items are to only be presented at workshops and courses within our museums and are not to be handled by the public unless the Curator has agreed to an exemption.
- Handling items can be used at community venues and for handling by the public.

The best way to make our costume accessible would be to improve the collection's on-line presence. Work over the next three years to revise and complete the catalogue and photograph items will help us to meet this aim.

09.15 Collecting policies for other museums

Shropshire Museums will take into account the collecting policies of neighbouring museums and will consult with these services to avoid conflicts of interest, duplication of effort and wasting resources.

Museum / Museum Service	Collecting Area	Scope
Attingham Park	House and estate	Historically collected.
Behthall Hall	House and estate	Historically collected.
Childhood and Costume Museum	Nationwide	Items of historic costume
Clun Local History Museum	Clun and surrounding parishes	Actively collecting.
Dudmaston	House and estate	Historically collected.
House on Crutches Museum	Bishop's Castle and surrounding parishes	Actively collecting.
Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust	Ironbridge Gorge, East Shropshire Coalfield	Actively collecting material associated with the social and industrial history of the Gorge.
National Gymnastics Association	Nationwide	Actively collecting material associated with the National Gymnastics Association
Northgate Museum	Bridgnorth and surrounding parishes	Actively collecting
Oswestry Railway Museum	Oswestry and surrounding parishes	Actively collecting material associated with the Cambrian Railway
Oswestry Town Museum	Oswestry and surrounding parishes	Actively collecting
Royal Air Force Museum	Worldwide	Actively collecting material associated with the RAF
The Story of Drayton Museum	Market Drayton and Surrounding Parishes	Actively collecting material
Shropshire Regimental Museum	Nationwide	Actively collecting material associated with Shropshire Regiments and British Army.
Sunnycroft	House	Historically collected.
Wartime Aircraft Recovery Group	Regionally	Actively collecting material associated with aircraft crash sites.

Wenlock Olympian Society	Much Wenlock and surrounding parishes	Actively collecting material associated with Wenlock Olympian Games and National Olympian Association
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10. Decorative and Applied Art Collection

Key Collection

10.01 Rationale for collecting

Shropshire has inspired and been home to generations of artist, craftsmen and writers over the years. Their work gives us an insight into how they perceived the area and both worked and interacted with it.

The decorative arts also reflect an aspect of industry within the County in particular the products of the potteries and foundries of Ironbridge Gorge and beyond.

10.02 Collection history

The majority of the decorative art collection has been acquired through donation since 1974. Small historic collections, such as that of Whitchurch Museum, were inherited by the local authority museums. In more recent years large private collections have been purchased (Godden) or donated (Hayes).

10.03 Current holdings and key items

The current decorative art collection consists mainly of but also includes some fine metalwork.

Shropshire Museums has a significant collection around 3,500 pieces of pottery and porcelain, mainly of eighteenth and nineteenth century date. These include examples of local makers such as Caughley, Coalport and Maw which has been developed significantly in recent years into a nationally important collection.

The strength of our Decorative Art collection lies in the quality of particular groups rather than single items, in particular our Caughley Collection.

10.04 Size and significance

The Decorative Art collection consists of approximately 6,000 objects and equates to 2% of the overall Museum Collection in our care. Approximately 70% of the collection is of national importance and 10% of regional significance. The remaining 20% is of local significance. As a result, Shropshire Museums will actively pursue Designation status for this collection over the next five years.

The size and significance of the collection means that Shropshire Museums will work towards preparing collection data to ultimately support an application for ACE Designation for the collection over the next five years. This will involve support from volunteer researchers and external specialists.

10.05 Condition of collection

The collection is in a fair condition although some damage has occurred due to poor storage. A small amount of remedial conservation work was addressed as part of the transfer of the collection to the new Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery.

10.06 Collection rationalisation and disposal

Shropshire Museums is still working to complete the existing documentation backlog. As each artefact is accessioned into the permanent collection it is examined to see if it falls within the Museum Service's Decorative and Applied Art Collecting Policy. Material that falls within the Collecting Policy is then researched to establish ownership. If ownership is unclear, the collector or depositor will be contacted and asked to confirm in writing that the specimens have been donated to the museum. If they are unwilling to make this commitment, they should be asked to remove the material from the store at their own expense.

Non-accessioned material with good documentation that fits the collecting policy will be considered for accessioning. Otherwise it is treated as follows:

- Material that falls outside the policy will be considered for educational use, but must be considered disposable within this category.
- Material that does not have any supporting information is identified and assessed to see if it has any future value within the collection or as an educational resource.

Objects that fall outside any of the above criteria will be disposed of. Objects that have already been accessioned are legally owned by Shropshire Council and can only be disposed under the strict procedure laid down in the Disposal Policy above.

10.07 Expertise and advice

Shropshire Museums has no professional staff with specialist knowledge of decorative and applied art collections. Therefore research and review of this collection will be undertaken under the guidance of an external subject specialist.

10.08 Approach to and management of active collecting

Shropshire Museums will not actively collect decorative and applied arts within the period of this policy except where acquisitions are linked directly to planned interpretative developments and to address gaps in the collection which may assist with achieving Designation for the collection.

10.09 Future themes and priorities for collecting

Shropshire Museums will not actively collect decorative art. However offers of donations will be considered where they:

- Are significant works featuring the Shropshire landscape, environment and built heritage.
- Are works featuring Shropshire people or those works produced by under-represented Shropshire artists or makers.
- Are works which represent periods, forms or makers under-represented in the collection.

We will prioritise material which is not actively collected by another institution.

Shropshire Museums will continue to periodically review the use and status of objects in the accessioned collection. Any recommended change will be approved by Cabinet when this Policy is next reviewed.

10.10 Development of handling collection

The Museum Service will continue to identify both real artefacts and replica objects which will improve the decorative art handling collection. Specific items and collections will be sourced and added to the collection for specific projects, exhibitions and events.

10.11 Collection storage

The decorative art collection is held in a dedicated decorative art store at the Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery. At present, the available storage space for this collection provides for approximately 30% expansion. Work is ongoing to update location records reorder the collection to improve access.

10.12 Documentation standards and procedures

To date 15% of the collection has been catalogued and entered onto the collection management database. This equates to a backlog of 85 days cataloguing.

A significant body of work is needed to photograph the collection and revise catalogue entries to make the collection accessible on-line. Works has been completed on the Caughley Collection and has started on the Coalport. However, the documentation backlog is unlikely to be address under the period of the current policy due to a lack of resources, namely staff time and fees for external consultants.

10.13 Legal requirements

There are no legal requirements associated with this collection.

10.14 Collection display and interpretation

Items from the decorative art collection are displayed at Ludlow Museum, Much Wenlock Museum and Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery. Periodic displays are made at Whitchurch Heritage Centre.

10.15 Collecting policies for other museums

Shropshire Museums will take into account the collecting policies of neighbouring museums and will consult with these services to avoid conflicts of interest, duplication of effort and wasting resources.

Museum / Museum Service	Collecting Area	Scope
Attingham Park	House and estate	Historically collected.
Benthall Hall	House and estate	Historically collected.
Boscobel House	House and estate	Historically collected.
Dudmaston	House and estate	Historically collected.
Herefordshire Heritage Services	Herefordshire	Works which have some relevance to the county of Herefordshire or the immediate vicinity.
Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust	Ironbridge Gorge, East Shropshire Coalfield	Illustrations or artefacts depicting industrial environments, processes and people. Also ceramics of Coalport, Caughley, Jackfield and Broseley production.
Sunnycroft	House and estate	Historically collected.

11. Ethnography Collection

11.01 Rationale for collecting

Like many ethnographic collections in Britain's museums this material has mainly been donated by local individuals who have travelled extensively or worked abroad and brought these items home as souvenirs. It was donated historically to Shropshire's museums as a window on the British Empire and the wider world.

11.02 Collection history

Shropshire Museums has a small collection of objects collected from around the world which form part of the historic museum collections from Ludlow, Whithurch and Shrewsbury. These were donated to Shropshire Museums prior to the introduction of a Collecting Policy.

11.03 Current holdings and key items

Shrewsbury Museums Service's collections included numerous ethnographic items until they were transferred to Birmingham Museum in the 1960s. A small collection of about 200 items is retained on a care and maintenance basis. This collection will be subject to a general review and conservation assessment during the period that this policy is in force.

The ethnographic collection consists mainly of African material. However, the collection also includes items from Asia and the Americas.

11.04 Size and significance

The ethnographic collection consists of approximately 210 objects and equates to less than 1% of the overall Museum Collection in our care. Approximately 70% of the collection is of national importance and the remaining 40% is of local significance.

Most of the material is of low significance. However, a specialist assessment needs to be made of this collection.

11.05 Condition of collection

The collection is on the whole in fair condition although some organic items have suffered from pest infestations prior to the completion of the Ludlow Museum Resource Centre and transfer of collections to this facility.

11.06 Collection rationalisation and disposal

This small collection is retained on a care and maintenance basis.

Shropshire Museums is still working to complete the existing documentation backlog. As each artefact is accessioned into the permanent collection it is examined to see if it falls within the Museum Service's Ethnographic Collecting Policy. Material that falls within the Collecting Policy is then researched to establish ownership. If ownership is unclear, the collector or depositor will be contacted and asked to confirm in writing that the specimens have been donated to the museum. If they are unwilling to make this commitment, they should be asked to remove the material from the store at their own expense.

Non-accessioned material with good documentation that fits the collecting policy will be considered for accessioning or transfer to a museum with an active ethnographic collection. Otherwise it is treated as follows:

- Material that falls outside the policy will be considered for educational use, but must be considered disposable within this category.
- Material that does not have any supporting information is identified and assessed to see if it has any future value within the collection or as an educational resource.

Objects that fall outside any of the above criteria will be disposed of. Objects that have already been accessioned are legally owned by Shropshire Council and can only be disposed under the strict procedure laid down in the Disposal Policy above.

11.07 Expertise and advice

Shropshire Museum has no in-house expertise in this area. Therefore research and review of this collection will be undertaken under the guidance of an external subject specialist. Regionally Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery is the only organisation employing a specialist in this field.

11.08 Approach to and management of active collecting

Shropshire Museums will not actively collect ethnographic material within the period of this policy.

11.09 Future themes and priorities for collecting

Shropshire Museums will no longer collect ethnographic material except for in cases where the material relates to important personalities and collectors with a strong association to Shropshire are offered for donation.

Shropshire Museums will continue to periodically review the use and status of objects in the accessioned collection and seek to transfer material to a more appropriate institution. Any recommended change will be approved by Cabinet when this Policy is next reviewed.

11.10 Development of handling collection

Once an expert assessment has been made of the collection items will be selected for a handling collection which supports the interpretation of key stories about Shropshire and its important personalities.

11.11 Collection storage

The ethnographic collection is currently held at Ludlow Museum Resource Centre. The environmental conditions within the Museum Resource Centre meet the criteria outlined in the Standards in the Museum Care of Ethnographic Collections. At present, the available storage space for this collection offers some limited expansion space. There are no current plans to increase storage capacity.

11.12 Documentation standards and procedures

To date 90% of the collection has been catalogued and entered onto the collection management database. This equates to a backlog of 1 days cataloguing. However, the documentation backlog is unlikely to be address under the period of the current policy due to a lack of resources, namely staff time and fees for external consultants.

11.13 Legal requirements

There are no legal issues associated with this collection.

11.14 Collection display and interpretation

At present a small display of items from the collection is displayed at Ludlow Museum Resource Centre and Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery to show the historic diversity of collecting in the County.

Items from the collection are used on occasions to illustrate cultural links and contexts for items in our core collection.

11.15 Collecting policies for other museums

Shropshire Museums will take into account the collecting policies of neighbouring museums and will consult with these services to avoid conflicts of interest, duplication of effort and wasting resources.

Museum / Museum Service	Collecting Area	Scope
Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery	Regional	Actively collecting a principal repository for the region.
Horniman Museum	National	Actively collecting
Herefordshire Heritage Services		Not active
Northgate Museum	Bishop's Castle and surrounding parishes.	Historically collected
Shropshire Regimental Museum	National	Actively collecting material associated with the Shropshire Regiments and British Army overseas.

12. Fine Art Collection

12.01 Rationale for collecting

Shropshire has inspired and been home to generations of artists, craftsmen and writers over the years. Their work gives us an insight into how they perceived the area and both worked and interacted with it.

Topographical paintings and prints are also a valuable visual record of the County especially prior to the invention of photography.

12.02 Collection history

Many of the paintings within our collection have been civic donations which were transferred to Shropshire Museums. Some form part of the historic collections of Whitchurch Museum and Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery. Significant local paintings have also been purchased over the past 40 years often with significant grant aid contributions.

12.03 Current holdings and key items

Shropshire Museums' current collection consists mainly of paintings including of oils, water-colours and prints, principally of local topographical interest. Views of Shrewsbury, Ludlow and South Shropshire form the largest grouping. There are also small collections from Much Wenlock and Whitchurch. This material includes a notable collection of works by Randolph Caldecott.

In 1989 the County Council began a policy of commissioning modern works of art and crafts from Shropshire artists and makers, of either national standing or judged to be of that potential. This group of mainly paintings, alongside some modern art pieces commissioned by Shrewsbury Museums, forms a small contemporary arts collection.

Shropshire Museums also currently cares for a collection of paintings which were historically owned by Shropshire County Council and have been formally transferred to the museum collections. These paintings once hung at Shirehall and the Law Courts and feature notable figures in local administration and well-known views within the County.

Among the key items within the Fine Art Collection is a significant collection of work by Randolph Caldecott. Pair of William Williams' paintings of Coalbrookdale are also an important artistically and as record of Shropshire industrial past.

12.04 Size and Significance

The fine art collection consists of approximately 3,700 objects and equates to 1% of the overall Museum Collection in our care. Approximately 5% of the collection is of national importance and the remaining 70% is of regional importance. The remaining 25% is of local significance.

12.05 Condition of collection

The collection is in a fair condition. A significant number of key oil paintings were identified for conservation work and treated as part of the development of the new Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery.

12.06 Collection rationalisation and disposal

Shropshire Museums is still working to complete the existing documentation backlog. As each artefact is accessioned into the permanent collection it is examined to see if it falls within the Museum Service's Fine Art Collecting Policy. Material that falls within the Collecting Policy is then researched to establish ownership. If ownership is unclear, the collector or depositor will be contacted and asked to confirm in writing that the specimens have been donated to the museum. If they are unwilling to make this commitment, they should be asked to remove the material from the store at their own expense.

Non-accessioned material with good documentation that fits the collecting policy will be considered for accessioning. Otherwise it is treated as follows:

- Material that falls outside the policy will be considered for educational use, but must be considered disposable within this category.
- Material that does not have any supporting information is identified and assessed to see if it has any future value within the collection or as an educational resource.

Objects that fall outside any of the above criteria will be disposed of. Objects that have already been accessioned are legally owned by Shropshire Council and can only be disposed under the strict procedure laid down in the Disposal Policy above.

12.07 Expertise and advice

Shropshire Museums has no professional staff with specialist knowledge of decorative and applied art collections. Therefore research and review of this collection will be undertaken under the guidance of an external subject specialist.

12.08 Approach to and management of active collecting

During the period of this policy Shropshire Museums will not be proactive in this area of collecting except where acquisitions are linked directly to planned interpretative developments or are secure the ownership of significant paintings on long term loan.

12.09 Future priorities for collecting

Shropshire Museums will continue to acquire works offered for donation featuring the Shropshire landscape, environment and built heritage. It will consider works of art featuring Shropshire people or those works produced by Shropshire artists or makers or those with a particular connection with the County.

Shropshire Museums will continue to periodically review the use and status of objects in the accessioned collection. Any recommended change will be approved by Cabinet when this Policy is next reviewed.

12.10 Development of handling collection

Shropshire Museums will continue to identify both real artefacts and replica objects which will improve the decorative art handling collection. Specific items and collections will be sourced and added to the collection for specific projects, exhibitions and events.

12.11 Collection storage

The Fine Arts collection is currently stored at the Ludlow Museum Resource Centre in a controlled store and at Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery. At present, the available storage spaces for this collection are over capacity. There are no current plans to increase storage capacity.

12.12 Documentation standards and procedures

To date 74% of the collection has been catalogued and entered onto the collection management database. This equates to a backlog of 16 days cataloguing. All oil paintings have been photographed at high resolution and published on-line.

A small body of work is needed to photograph the remaining items in the collection and revise catalogue entries to make the collection accessible on-line. However, the documentation backlog is unlikely to be addressed under the period of the current policy due to a lack of resources, namely staff time and fees for external consultants.

12.13 Legal requirements

There are no legal issues associated with this collection.

12.14 Collection display and interpretation

A small number of paintings are on display at Ludlow Museum, Powis Castle and Much Wenlock Museum with more substantial displays at Whitchurch Heritage Centre and Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery. A high proportion of our oil paintings are now on display at the new Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery with temporary exhibitions planned which will draw upon other items within the collection.

12.15 Collecting policies for other museums

Shropshire Museums will take into account the collecting policies of neighbouring museums and will consult with these services to avoid conflicts of interest, duplication of effort and wasting resources.

Museum / Museum Service	Collecting Area	Scope
Herefordshire Heritage Services	Herefordshire	Works which have some relevance to the county of Herefordshire or the immediate vicinity.
Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust	Ironbridge Gorge, East Shropshire Coalfield	Illustrations or artefacts depicting industrial environments, processes and people. Also ceramics of Coalport, Caughley, Jackfield and Broseley production.

13. Geology

🔑 Key Collection

13.01 Rationale for collecting

Shropshire has some of the most varied geology in the whole of Britain. Eleven of the thirteen geological time periods are represented in Shropshire. No other area in Britain of a similar size shows such a diverse range of geological time periods. All over the world there are geological formations named after places in Shropshire such as Ludlow, Wenlock and Caradoc. This shows just how important the geology of Shropshire is, not only locally but worldwide.

13.02 Collection history

Our Geology Collection's first acquisitions are part of the historic collections of Ludlow Museum and Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery. These were actively added to in the 1970s and 1980s. The collection has been audited and extensively rationalised in the past ten years.

13.03 Current holdings and key items

Shropshire Museums' Geological collections comprise some 41,500 specimens of fossils, minerals and rocks, currently stored at the Ludlow Museum Resource Centre. The collection has been recognised as one of international importance.

Over 30,000 specimens are fossils, the main strength of which is the comprehensive range of material from the Palaeozoic of south Shropshire and the Welsh Borders, especially those from the Silurian rocks. These specimens have good horizon and locality details and form a valuable scientific reference to one of Britain's best-known classic geological areas. The collection also contains a useful range of comparative material from other British sites. Major sections of the fossil collection are as follows:

Fossil vertebrates : The collection contains both Shropshire, British and foreign material. Of particular note are:

- The Colvin & Baker collection of Caenozoic vertebrates from the Siwalik Hills of India
- Silurian & Devonian fish collection from Shropshire & the Welsh Borders
- Rhynchosaur material and Cheirotherium prints from Grinshill and comparative material from Cheshire.
- Pleistocene mammoths from Condover

Fossil invertebrates: The collection contains examples from most fossil groups from a wide stratigraphic range, mostly from British sites. Particular strengths lie in the Palaeozoic specimens from south Shropshire and the Welsh Borders. The Silurian cephalopod collection is said to be the best collection of this material in the UK.

Fossil plants: Some of the earliest known land plants have been found in the Ludlow Bone Bed, and this Upper Silurian material is represented in the collection. Upper Carboniferous plants from Shropshire sites are also well represented.

Rock collection: This collection comprises of about 1,000 specimens of igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary rocks from Shropshire, British and world-wide localities, it includes some good examples of sedimentary structures

Mineral collection: Approximately 1,500 specimens from British and world-wide sites are present in the collection, including specimens from Whitchurch Museum. The original nineteenth century Ludlow Natural History Society Collection contained many Shropshire minerals but was disposed of in the 1950s, Shropshire minerals are now poorly represented.

Geological archive: the museum service holds a substantial collection of specialist and historic geological reference books, maps and field note books. These items are invaluable and form a regularly consulted collection resource. The Shropshire Geological site database. details and reports on close to 900 geological sites are held on a paper database. Shropshire Geological Society Library consists of periodicals and re-prints have been housed in the Museum Service building in Ludlow since 1995, the collection was formerly offered to the Museum Service in 2001. Duplicates from the journal runs were removed from the sets and transferred to Hereford Museums.

The importance of this collection to the development of modern geology means that this collection is considered a candidate for Designation status.

13.04 Size and Significance

The geology collection consists of approximately 41,500 objects and equates to 15% of the overall Museum Collection in our care. Approximately 30% of the collection is of national importance and the remaining 70% is of regional significance. Shropshire Museums will actively pursue Designation status for this collection.

The size and significance of the collection means that Shropshire Museums will work towards preparing collection data to ultimately support an application for ACE Designation for the collection over the next five years. This will involve support from volunteer researchers and external specialists.

13.05 Condition of collection

The collection is in good to fair condition and all the material has been audited and repacked in the last ten years.

13.06 Collection rationalisation and disposal

The 1991 collecting policy stated that the geological collections will be rationalised. This procedure has been, and continues to be carried out as follows:

- Material is examined to see if it falls within Shropshire Museums' Geology Collecting Policy.
- Material that falls within the Collecting Policy is then researched to establish ownership.
- If ownership is unclear, the collector or depositor will be contacted and asked to confirm in writing that the specimens have been donated to the museum. If they are unwilling to make this commitment, they should be asked to remove the material from the store at their own expense.

Non-accessioned material with good documentation that fits the collecting policy will be considered for accessioning. Otherwise it is treated as follows:

- Material that falls outside the policy will be considered for educational use, but must be considered disposable within this category.
- Material that does not have any stratigraphic or site detail should be identified and assessed to see if it has any future value within the collection or as an educational resource.

Specimens that fall outside any of the above criteria will be disposed of. Specimens that have already been accessioned are legally owned by Shropshire Council and can only be disposed under the strict procedure laid down in the Disposal Policy above

13.07 Expertise and advice

Shropshire Museums employs one trainee Curator of Natural Sciences based at the Museum Resource Centre. In 2016 the Friends of Ludlow Museum employed a specialist team to digitise and catalogue the collection over the next 3 years.

13.08 Approach to and management of active collecting

So far as geological material is concerned Shropshire Museums will not acquire by any direct or indirect means any specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

Any exceptions to the above statement will only be because the museum is either:

- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin;
- or acquiring an item of minor importance that lacks secure ownership history but in the best judgement of experts in the field concerned has not been illicitly traded;
- or acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin;
- or in possession of reliable documentary evidence that the item was exported from its country of origin before 1970.

In these cases the museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

Shropshire Museums will seek to acquire geological specimens and associated material by staff fieldwork, gift, bequest, and purchase.

Since Shropshire is a classic area in which much geological research is carried out by acknowledged experts, the service will endeavour to encourage active collectors and researchers to deposit published material or at the very least, representative suites of material and copies of the relevant publication within the collection.

13.09 Future priorities for collecting

The service will only acquire material offered as donations which falls within the follow criteria:

- The geological history, stratigraphy and structure of Shropshire and the adjacent areas of the Welsh Border counties of Hereford, Worcester and Powys.
- Evidence of former life (fossils) from Shropshire and the adjacent Welsh Border Counties.
- The mineralisation of Shropshire (minerals & mineral suites)
- The mining and other economic geological resources of Shropshire (coal, vein minerals, sands, gravels, building stones, road stones, clays, limestones etc.)
- Geological collections and associated materials (such as field notebooks, books, maps etc.) assembled by Shropshire geological collectors.
- Geological site and temporary exposure records.

Geological material will be acquired from Shropshire and Welsh Border sites that are in danger of being lost, particularly mining and quarrying localities. Such localities will also be recorded on the geological site database.

Shropshire Museums will make every effort to obtain good stratigraphic and locality information when acquiring geological specimens. Grid references should be six figures or better.

Shropshire Museums will only acquire material from outside the stated policy for means of comparison with local material, to complement existing collections or for handling purposes, in-line with identified needs.

The Museum Service will not acquire any geological item that is beyond its capabilities and resources to adequately store conserve or display.

Shropshire Museums will continue to periodically review the use and status of objects in the accessioned collection. Any recommended change will be approved by Cabinet when this Policy is next reviewed.

13.10 Development of handling collection

The existing handling collection is currently under review and being rationalised. Depending upon the need for additional material identified after this process, material will continue to be collected for the handling collection in line with identified needs.

13.11 Collection storage

The Geological collections will be stored at the Ludlow Museum Resource Centre. At present, the available storage space for this collection is almost at capacity. There are no current plans to increase storage capacity.

13.12 Documentation standards and procedures

To date 35% of the collection has been catalogued and entered onto the collection management database. This equates to a backlog of 450 days cataloguing. However, the documentation backlog is unlikely to be address under the period of the current policy due to a lack of resources, namely staff time.

13.13 Legal requirements

There are no additional legal requirements associated with this collection.

13.14 Collection display and interpretation

Items from the Geology Collection are on display at Ludlow Museum, Much Wenlock Museum and Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery. Items are also on loan to Oswestry Town Museum.

13.15 Collecting policies for other museums

Shropshire Museums will take into account the collecting policies of neighbouring Museums and will consult with these services to avoid conflicts of interest, duplication of effort and wasting resources.

Museum / Museum Service	Collecting Area	Scope
Herefordshire Heritage Services	Herefordshire	Palaeontology and mineralogy
Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust	Ironbridge Gorge and East Shropshire Coalfield	Relating to mining and quarrying of coal, iron ore, limestone and clay
National Museum and Gallery of Wales	National and Welsh borders	Palaeontology
Natural History Museum	National	Palaeontology, Mineralogy

14. Numismatics

14.01 Rationale for collecting

Shropshire Museums collects numismatics is to:

- Represent the coins struck in Shropshire.
- Acquire single items or hoards which have regional or national significance and have a demonstrable story to tell about the history of Shropshire.
- Represent significant events and individuals which have been marked by the presentation or production of a medal or medallion.
- Acquire tokens which provide evidence of local businesses within Shropshire.

14.02 Collection history

The collection is derived variously from excavation, stray finds and private collections. On the whole, they have been acquired either by purchase and donation. The majority of the historic collection has been donated by local individuals. Purchases through the Treasure Act are the main source of numismatic acquisitions at the present time.

14.03 Current holdings and key items

Our current holdings are dominated by Roman coins including 3,500 coins from Wroxeter excavations and approximately 20 Roman Hoards.

Other important items include Shrewsbury mint coins dating from the 10th century until the Civil War.

Key items include

- A substantial number of Roman coins from Wroxeter Roman City excavations;
- The Walter Stubbs collection of Roman Coins;
- Hoards of coins including the Myddle Doublas Hoard and Albrighton Roman Hoard;
- Mediaeval, Anglo-Saxon and Civil War coins minted in Shrewsbury including the Baschurch Hoard;
- The Wenlock Olympian Games medals including an example of the pentathlon medal;
- Local trade tokens of 17th to 19th century date.

The remaining coins are mainly representative of British coinage with a small number of non-British currencies represented.

14.04 Size and significance of the collection

The collection consists of approximately 6,000 items including coins, tokens, seal impressions and medals. Approximately 5% of the collection is of national significance. The majority of the collection is of regional (90%) and local significance (5%). A reappraisal of the collections significance is required although two external grant bids to fund this research have, to date, failed to attract

funding. Further attempts to commission this work will be undertaken during the period of this policy.

14.05 Condition of collection and disposal

The vast majority of the coins are in silver (with a few struck in gold) and are in good condition with little need of remedial conservation. There is no sign of deterioration in any of the other coins or medallions which are in bronze or white metal alloys. The wax impressions are in good condition but monitoring is required to ensure that cracking of the wax does not occur. It is planned to transfer all the numismatic collection to archival drawer units at Ludlow Museum Resource Centre as part of the ongoing collection audit process.

14.06 Collection rationalisation

Shropshire Museums will no longer acquire non-British numismatics or finds from outside the county of Shropshire. Options for transferring foreign coins collections to a specialist museum will be explored. All military medals are first offered to military museums in the area and donations taken where no other museum is willing to acquire.

14.07 Expertise and advice

Shropshire Museums has no in-house specialist in numismatics. However, the Finds Liaison Officer based at Ludlow Museum Resource Centre provides support and advice and expertise has been sought through the West Midlands Archaeology Collections Subject Specialist Network.

The Shropshire Pub Token Collection was examined by a specialist in 2006-2007 and was published in a small book on Shropshire Pub Tokens.

14.08 Approach to and management of active collecting

During the period of this policy Shropshire Museums will not be proactive in this area of collecting except where acquisitions are linked directly to planned interpretative developments.

Shropshire Museums will continue to periodically review the use and status of objects in the accessioned collection. Any recommended change will be approved by the governing body/management committee.

14.09 Future priorities for collecting

Shropshire Museums will not actively collect numismatics apart from regionally or nationally significant examples. Where Treasure Act finds are offered for purchase and fit our collecting priorities we will express an interest to acquire and attempt to raise the grant aid required to purchase when appropriate.

Shropshire Museums will continue to periodically review the use and status of objects in the accessioned collection. Any recommended change will be approved by Cabinet when this Policy is next reviewed.

14.10 Development of handling collection

We do not allow accessioned coins and tokens within our collection to be used for handling sessions except on a one to one research basis. Replica coins are used for educational sessions and work is on-going to identify handling coins which can be mounted in acrylic to reduce the risk of loss or theft.

14.11 Storage of the collection

The Numismatic Collection held at Ludlow Museum Resource Centre. At present, the available storage space for this collection includes some capacity for expansion. There are no current plans to increase storage capacity.

14.12 Documentation standards and procedures

To date 20% of the collection has been catalogued and entered onto the collection management database. This equates to a backlog of 80 days cataloguing.

A significant body of work is needed to photograph the collection and revise catalogue entries to make the collection accessible on-line. However, the documentation backlog is unlikely to be addressed under the period of the current policy due to a lack of resources, namely staff time and fees for external consultants.

14.13 Legal requirements

There are no legal issues associated with this collection.

14.14 Collection Display and Interpretation

Coins and related objects are displayed at Much Wenlock Museum, Ludlow Museum and Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery.

Virtual access to the Collection has been improved through websites and images and collection records are being prepared to support further online access.

14.15 Collecting policies for other museums

Shropshire Museums will take into account the collecting policies of neighbouring Museums and will consult with these services to avoid conflicts of interest, duplication of effort and wasting resources.

Museum / Museum Service	Collecting Area	Scope
British Museum	National	Chance Finds of national significance.
Clun Local History Museum	Clun and surrounding parishes.	Actively collecting items with a local provenance.
House on Crutches Museum	Bishop's Castle and surrounding parishes.	Actively collecting items with a local provenance.
Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust	Ironbridge Gorge, East Shropshire Coalfield	Actively collecting items with a local provenance.
Northgate Museum	Bridgnorth and surrounding parishes	Actively collecting items with a local provenance.
Oswestry Town Museum	Oswestry and surrounding parishes	Actively collecting items with a local provenance.
RAF Museum	Worldwide	Actively collecting medals associated with RAF history
The Story of Drayton Museum	Markey Drayton and surrounding parishes	Actively collecting items with a local provenance.
Shropshire Regimental Museum	Nationwide	Actively collecting medals associated with Shropshire regiments and British Army.
Wartime Aircraft Recovery Group	Regionally	Actively collecting medals associated with Shropshire regiments and British Army.
Welsh Guards Museum	Nationwide	Actively collecting medals associated with Welsh Guards.

15. Social History Collection

15.01 Rationale for collecting

The Social History collection includes both the everyday things used by local people, and some of their more treasured possessions. They form a valuable record of the way that people used to live, eat, dress, work and play.

15.02 Collection history

The vast majority of the Social History Collection has been amassed since the creation of the local authority museum services in 1974. Almost all the material has been donated by members of the public. The recording of context for objects was poor until the 1990s and so the majority of this material is generic.

In 2014 Shropshire Museum accepted a rescue collection from Radbrook Culinary Museum which illustrates the educational work of the college during its early history. Associated archival material was accepted by Shropshire Archives. Along with the collection, Shropshire Museums has taken on the role of collecting institution for material relating to the College and its history.

15.03 Current holdings and key items

The strengths of the existing social history collections lie in the local history collections established over the years at Ludlow, Much Wenlock and Whitchurch. This collection in total amounts to around 10,000 items.

Domestic and working life: There is a noteworthy collection of mortars held at Ludlow. Local trades and crafts, domestic life, Dairying and cheese making, leisure activities and costume are also well represented.

Arms and armour: The Museum Service holds a small collection of approximately 50 firearms and a small collection of armour.

The social history collection has very little maritime, medical, music science and transport material in the collection.

At Much Wenlock Museum there is an important collection of material relating to Dr William Penny Brookes, the founding father of the modern Olympic Movement. An element of this collection is on loan from the Much Wenlock Olympic Association and Much Wenlock Town Council.

15.04 Size and significance

The social history collection consists of approximately 14,775 objects and equates to 5% of the overall Museum Collection in our care. Approximately 10% of the collection is of national importance. 10% is of regional significance and 80% of local significance.

15.05 Condition of collection

The social history collection is in fair condition.

15.06 Collection rationalisation and disposal

Shropshire Museums is still working to complete the existing documentation backlog. As each artefact is accessioned into the permanent collection it is examined to see if it falls within the Social History Collecting Policy. Material that falls within the Collecting Policy is then researched to establish ownership. If ownership is unclear, the collector or depositor will be contacted and asked to confirm in writing that the specimens have been donated to the museum. If they are unwilling to make this commitment, they should be asked to remove the material from the store at their own expense.

Non-accessioned material with good documentation that fits the collecting policy will be considered for accessioning. Otherwise it is treated as follows:

- Material that falls outside the policy will be considered for educational use, but must be considered disposable within this category.
- Material that does not have any supporting information is identified and assessed to see if it has any future value within the collection or as an educational resource.

Objects that fall outside any of the above criteria will be disposed of. Objects that have already been accessioned are legally owned by Shropshire Council and can only be disposed under the strict procedure laid down in the Disposal Policy above.

15.07 Expertise and advice

Shropshire Museums has no professional staff with specialist training in social history collections, although considerable experience of curating social history collections. Therefore research and review of this collection will be undertaken under the guidance of an external subject specialist.

15.08 Approach to and Management of active collecting

Shropshire Museums will accept items offered to us by donation which corresponds with the above criteria. Items offered for purchase will be considered where appropriate.

Primarily artefacts will be acquired which have a provenance from within the county of Shropshire. Occasionally a representative artefact will be acquired from outside the county. In this case Shropshire Museums will take into account the interests of local museums.

Shropshire Museums will look to actively seek and collect objects which will help to fill existing gaps within the collection either through addressing specific under represented themes or well provenance to provide key stories for interpretation.

15.09 Future priorities for collecting

Shropshire Museums will not collect generic material and will only acquire material with a strong local provenance and context.

We hope that by increasing the social history collections it will better reflect everyday life of the people of the county of Shropshire. Principle areas of collecting will include trades, professions, personal and domestic items, material related to education, religion, commerce, welfare and civic life.

Specific periods and themes which are underrepresented in the collection (local trade and industry, the Tudor and Stuart period) will be improved through proactive collecting.

Our museums will maintain close links with their own communities and will seek to develop local collections.

Shropshire Museums will work in partnership with Wenlock Town Council, Much Wenlock Olympian Society and International Olympic Museum in Lausanne to take any opportunity to enhance collections relating to William Penny Brookes and the Wenlock Olympian Games. We will actively pursue:

- material relating to Dr William Penny Brookes
- material relating to the history of the Olympic Movement in Much Wenlock
- contemporary material reflecting the continuing living tradition of Much Wenlock Olympics
- International material commemorating the role of Much Wenlock in the development of the Olympic Movement.
- The County Museum Service will take account of the interests of the International Olympic Museum in Lausanne.

Shropshire Museums will continue to periodically review the use and status of objects in the accessioned collection. Any recommended change will be approved by Cabinet when this Policy is next reviewed.

15.10 Development of handling collection

There is a growing collection of handling objects mainly for use for education sessions and loans.

15.11 Collection Storage

The merged collection has been relocated to the Ludlow Museum Resource Centre for long term storage. At present, the available storage space for this collection is over capacity. There are no current plans to increase storage capacity.

15.12 Documentation standards and procedures

To date 47% of the collection has been catalogued and entered onto the collection management database. This equates to a backlog of 110 days cataloguing.

A significant body of work is needed to photograph the collection and revise catalogue entries to make the collection accessible on-line. However, the documentation backlog is unlikely to be addressed under the period of the current policy due to a lack of resources, namely staff time and fees for external consultants.

15.13 Legal requirements

The senior member of the Curatorial Team is qualified to hold a museums firearms licence on behalf of Shropshire Museums. All firearms are kept in secure storage or displayed in secure showcases which meet the minimum legal requirement. This licence is due for renewal in 2020.

15.14 Collection display and interpretation

Items from our Social History Collection are displayed at Acton Scott Historic Working Farm, Ludlow Museum, Much Wenlock Museum, Shrewsbury Museum & art Gallery. We also have loans in place with Oswestry Town Museum. The collection is used extensively for museums in schools, museums in communities and education sessions on site.

15.15 Collecting policies for other museums

Shropshire Museums will take into account the collecting policies of neighbouring Museums and will consult with these services to avoid conflicts of interest, duplication of effort and wasting resources.

Museum / Museum Service	Collecting Area	Scope
Assault Glider Trust	National	Aviation, RAF and Army material relating to WWII Assault Gliders.
Bishop's Castle Railway Museum	Route of Bishop's Castle Railway line	Locomotive & railway history relating to the Bishop's Castle line.
Childhood & Costume Museum	Not known	Items relating to childhood and historic costume.
Clun Local History Museum	Clun and surrounding parishes	General material relating to the social history of the area.
Herefordshire Heritage Services	Herefordshire	Locally made, used, or associated objects favoured. Coins, militaria and trade tokens of Hereford origin.
House on Crutches Museum Collection Trust	Bishop's Castle & Surrounding parishes	General material relating to the social history of the area.
Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust	Ironbridge Gorge, East Shropshire Coalfield	General material relating to the social history of the Ironbridge Gorge.
Market Drayton Museum	Market Drayton and surrounding parishes	General material relating to the social history of the area.
Museum of Lost Content	Not known	General social history material
Northgate Museum	Bridgnorth Town & surrounding parishes	General material relating to the social history of the area.
Oswestry Town Museum	Oswestry Town and surrounding parishes	General material relating to the social history of the area.
Oswestry Railway Museum	Route of Cambrian Railway	Locomotive & railway history relating to the Cambrian Railway and related line.
RAF Cosford	National	Aeronautical / RAF material
Shrewsbury Railway Heritage Trust	The route of the Old Potts Railway Line and material relating to Shrewsbury Railway heritage.	Locomotive & railway history relating to the Old Potts Line & Shrewsbury.

Shropshire Regimental Museum	National	Material relating to Shropshire Regiments.
Wartime Aircraft Recovery Museum	Shropshire & surrounding counties	Material relating to aircraft crash sites.
Welsh Guards Collection	National	Material relating to the Welsh Guards
Whitchurch Heritage Centre	Whitchurch Town and surrounding parishes	General material relating to the social history of the area.

16. Documentation Policy Statement

Documentation underpins every aspect of museum activity. Recording collection information is central to being accountable for the collections, their accessibility, management, research, study and use.

The aim of Shropshire Museums' documentation policy is to ensure that the museum fulfils its responsibilities in relation to security, management and access of collections.

16.01 Key requirements of museum documentation

Establishing exactly what is in the collections at any one time	Prior to their relocation, full inventories were made of collections at Ludlow Museum (2004), Much Wenlock Museum (2011) and Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery (2013) creating a comprehensive list of the majority of material held by Shropshire Museums. Work is still outstanding for agricultural collections held at Acton Scott Historic Working Farm and the off-site stores.
Establishing Shropshire Museums legal rights and responsibilities for those collections	A full review of loans was made in 2011 and work in continuing to use this data to establish agreed rights and responsibilities for all items within the collection.
Maintain an up to date location record for every object in the collections.	Internal Transfer Records were made for collections relocated to Ludlow Museum and Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery. Board locations are identified but more specific locations need to be finalised. Work is also still required to update the collections management database.
Link objects with their associated information, including provenance, associations and collections management history	The majority of objects within the can be linked with either their paper or electronic records or both.
Enable retrieval of objects and their associated information	Retrieval of electronic records is being improved through standardisation of terminology. Paper records will be transferred to the collections management database as resources allow.
Enable access to objects and their associated information for staff and volunteers through the collections management database.	All staff and volunteers have access to the collections management database.
Enable access to objects and their associated information for the public through an online database.	Public access to records is possible through the online database and other sources of collections data such as Darwin Country.

Provide insurance and audit information for Shropshire Council	Inventories exist of all high value items for insurance purposes.
Provide audit information for external licensing bodies.	Inventories exist for all licences held by Shropshire Museums. Lists are developed for specific licences as required.

16.02 Ethics and legislation

Collections information will be acquired, stored, managed and used in compliance with the Museum Association's *Code of Ethics for Museums* and to SPECTRUM Standards.

Shropshire Museums' collections information will be recorded and held in compliance with all legal requirements, including the Data Protection Act (1998) and the Freedom of Information Act (2000).

16.03 Accountability

Shropshire Museums will maintain at least the minimum level of key requirements for collections documentation as outlined above. This will ensure that the service to identify and locate all items for which we are legally responsible, including loans.

16.04 Documentation systems and standards

Shropshire Museums documents its collection in line with SPECTRUM 4: The UK Museum Documentation Standard. An outline of these systems follows but for further detailed information on how this is done, the current museum service Documentation Procedural Manual should be consulted.

A data entry manual for entering and editing digitising records ensures that standard formats and systems are used across the service. Applicable thesauri have been introduced or developed for each collection.

<p>Entry records:</p> <p>Shropshire Museums uses a MDA style combined transfer of title and entry forms. These were preceded by a set of receipt books.</p> <p>An entry record of each object is completed on its catalogue record.</p>	<p>Objects are accepted for entry into Shropshire Museums' care for the following purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration for accessioning into the collections • On loan for display or identification <p>An entry form is completed for all deposits and signed by the depositor and museum representative. Object entry records are held in perpetuity.</p> <p>All entry data is also held on the collections management database.</p>
<p>Acquisition Records:</p>	<p>Acquisition can only be authorised by Curatorial Board in line with the requirements set out in Shropshire Museums' Acquisition Policy. Items acquired by the service are</p>

<p>Shropshire Museums uses a MDA style combined transfer of title and entry forms. These were preceded by a set of receipt books.</p> <p>An accession record of each object is completed on its catalogue record.</p>	<p>formally accessioned onto the collections management database recording all data available but as a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accession number • Object simple name • Number of objects or parts • Brief description • Acquisition method, source and date • Permanent location <p>Transfer of title is recorded on the object entry form. Object acquisition records are held in perpetuity.</p>
<p>Loans In:</p> <p>Shropshire Museums uses a MDA style combined transfer of title and entry forms for short term loans and a Loan Agreement Form for long term loans (6 months or more).</p> <p>An inward loans record of each object is completed on its catalogue record.</p>	<p>Loans can only be authorised by the Curatorial Board in line with the requirements set out in Shropshire Museums’ Loans Policy.</p> <p>Loans in will be accepted for a minimum of 1 week and a maximum of 5 years and will be fully documented using an entry form or formal inward loan agreement. Long term loans are recorded on the collections management database.</p> <p>A record of all previous object loans is maintained on collection management database, to act as an audit trail.</p>
<p>Loans out:</p> <p>Shropshire Museums uses a MDA style exit form for short term loans and a Loan Agreement Form for long term loans (6 months or more).</p> <p>An outwards loans record of each object is completed on its catalogue record.</p>	<p>Acquisition can only be authorised by the Curatorial Board in line with the requirements set out in Shropshire Museums’ Loans Policy</p> <p>Loans in will be made for a minimum of 1 week and a maximum of 5 years and will be fully documented using an exit form or formal outward loan agreement. Long term loans are recorded on the collections management database.</p> <p>A record of all previous object loans is maintained on collection management database, to act as an audit trail.</p>
<p>Location and movement records:</p> <p>Shropshire Museums uses a MDA style Object Movement Form.</p> <p>The home location of each object is marked on its catalogue record. Home and current locations are recorded.</p>	<p>A record of up-to-date locations must be maintained for all objects in the collection. Therefore no person should move an object or access or amend a location record without the authorisation from the Curatorial Team.</p> <p>All storage areas must be locked at all times and only accessed under the authorisation of the Curatorial Team.</p> <p>An Internal movement form should be completed for any transfer between Shropshire Museum Site and an Exit Form completed for any loan to an external organisation or individual. All data should be updated on the Collections management Database in a timely manner.</p>

	A record of all previous object locations is maintained on collection management database, to act as an audit trail.
<p>Catalogue:</p> <p>Shropshire Museums uses ADLIB Museum as its collections management database. This is held on a central server and is available across all museum sites. These were preceded by a set of MDA card indexes which are archived at Ludlow Museum Resource Centre and Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery.</p>	<p>New acquisitions will be catalogued as soon as possible and within not more than one year after acquisition. As much information as possible about the object and its history should be recorded, or referenced within the record.</p> <p>Object history files are maintained at Ludlow Museum Resource Centre and Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery along with copies of high resolution images and any additional documentation associated with the collections held on site.</p> <p>All object catalogue records and history files are held in perpetuity.</p>
<p>Exit Records:</p> <p>Shropshire Museums uses a MDA style Exit Form.</p> <p>An exit record of each object is completed on its catalogue record.</p>	<p>Shropshire Museums will return a deposit if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The object is deemed not suitable for accessioning into the collections. • The loan period, for display or identification, has ended. <p>Objects that are not accepted into the collections or where a loan agreement has terminated should be returned to the depositor. If the depositor cannot be contacted after a period of no less than 3 months and after formal notice in writing, the object will be disposed of in accordance with agreed procedures.</p> <p>Any disposal from the accessioned collection is subject to authorisation by the Curatorial Board and Shropshire Museum's Disposal Policy</p> <p>All object exit records are held in perpetuity.</p>

16.05 Digitisation of records

Many of Shropshire Museums' existing records are paper-based. In order to improve access and accountability, we will enter all new records onto our collections management database. Over time and in a phased programme, we will convert our older paper records to a computerised format, ensuring also that copies are kept in safe separate locations at our main repositories: Ludlow Museum Resource Centre and Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery.

Existing digital data from Shropshire County Museum Service and Shrewsbury Museums has been merged and transferred to our collections management database. This database is now being standardised.

16.06 Retrospective documentation

Shropshire Museums has a Documentation Plan to address existing backlogs. A Collections audit has undertaken at all our sites and retrospective documentation is in progress.

Around 20 person years of data entry work is still required to catalogue the collections. Whilst entry documentation is up to date and most items are fully identified and labelled there is an accession backlog of 30% to 60% of the collections. A Collections Documentation Plan to deal with this issue is in place.

Volunteer support has been, and continues to be, an important resource in addressing our documentation backlog. The Heritage Lottery Funded Volunteering for Shropshire's Heritage Project significantly improved to our documentation whilst developing systems and procedures to continue best practice into the future. However, current limited resources due to significant savings made by the service have reduced available staffing to oversee and undertake documentation work beyond maintaining basic records.

16.07 Marking and labelling

Artefacts and specimens are individually marked with a unique accession number and in many cases are also labelled with identification, donor and other relevant information.

Shropshire Museums labels and / or marks all objects in the collections in order to maintain a connection between an object and its associated information. All items in the Shropshire Museums' care are labelled or marked according to MDA guidelines.

Labelling and marking techniques will be used that are:

- Appropriate for the object
- Durable yet reversible

A review is undertaken at least every five years to ensure that all labelling and marking is carried out to the required standard.

16.08 Access to collections information

Many of our services are supported by on-line information. In line with e-government initiatives work is currently underway to also deliver services on-line and electronically.

Shropshire Museums is currently transferring its collection records to the collections management database. To date approximately 20% of collections have been digitised in this way. Work is also undergoing to review the data standards and ensure quality. The existing largely manual system consists of a limited number of indexes such as donor, classification and simple name.

Access to Shropshire Museums collection database data is available online through CollectionsBase which can be access through a range of website including Discovering Shropshire's History and Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery's website.

More comprehensive data is available to researchers on request and can be provided in a range of digital formats or as a hard copy. Access to certain data such as personal information, find-spots and valuations may be restricted unless legitimate reasons for access and legal requirements are met.

Shropshire Museum's staff and volunteers have expertise in a range of areas. This information is made accessible in publications such as on-line content, publications and scientific papers and lectures both to specialist and generalist audiences. We are working to develop more innovative approaches to technology and are currently exploring social networking, phone apps and other media.

16.09 Security copy of collections information

All new collections data is added to the collections management database by the Curatorial Team to ensure its accessibility and security. As our collection records are added to the collection management database their cards are archived and kept as a security copy.

In order to preserve the collections management database, the collection management database is maintained by Shropshire Council's ICT Services. The system is backed up nightly by ICT services and manual backups are undertaken by curatorial staff after substantial changes have been made.

16.10 Maintaining systems

A substantial review and overhaul of Shropshire Museums documentation systems were undertaken in 2009. Our Documentation Procedures Manual is reviewed at least every five years to ensure systems are effective and accessible. It is next due to revision in 2020.

Shropshire Museums has a licence and maintenance agreement in place for both its collection management database and online catalogue.

17. Collection Care and Conservation Policy Statement

Shropshire Museums aims to store, handle, display and use its collections in a way that minimises the risk of damage and deterioration. An annual review of our resources, facilities and activities is used to identify and prioritise collection care projects.

17.01 Conservation principles

In order to ensure that collections can be used, rather than used up, a careful balance between conservation and use has to be achieved. Collections can only benefit present and future users if professional standards of care are applied to ensure their long term survival.

In order to ensure high levels of collection care are maintained Shropshire Museums works to the Standards in Museum Care of Collections published by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

17.02 Ethics and legislation

Shropshire Museums will undertake collections care and conservation in compliance with the Museum Association's *Code of Ethics for Museums*.

Shropshire Museums will ensure that all collections care and conservation tasks are undertaken in compliance with Shropshire Council's Health and Safety Policy and conforms to all necessary legislation including:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- COSHH Regulations 2002

17.03 Standards for collections care

Shropshire Museums works to the Benchmarks in Collection Care which informs this policy and our collections care procedures.

Collection condition assessments: Collection condition assessments have been carried out, are underway or are planned for most areas of the collection. Spot checks are also carried out as items are catalogued &/or repacked. Items with special preservation requirements have been identified, and appropriate environmental conditions provided.

Object Packing: Shropshire Museums aims to ensure that all materials, regardless of format, receive appropriate physical protection. We have a continuing programme to replace non-archival quality packaging with archival-quality packaging, where required.

Environmental monitoring: A programme is in place to measure relative humidity, temperature and light levels in our galleries and stores. An environmental monitoring system is in place at the Museum Resource Centre, Ludlow Museum and Much Wenlock Museum. A monitoring system was installed at the new Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery in 2014 to cover both gallery areas and stores. Records are kept of all environmental monitoring and collated monthly and retained for a minimum of 5 years.

Building Assessments: All buildings used to house collections are regularly inspected. Potential access for points for vermin, insects and dust, including pipes, cracks and electrical/air ducts, are identified and sealed. A schedule for the routine maintenance of buildings and utilities is also in place. There is sufficient space to accommodate our current storage requirements although there is a need to address future storage needs for certain identified collections. A preservation advisory panel or advisory service is consulted in planning any major building work. An annual security assessment, including recommendations for improvement, is presented to senior managers and kept under review to determine whether recommendations have been implemented.

Housekeeping: All museum galleries and stores are regularly cleaned as part of the buildings general housekeeping. Items on open display are cleaned by the Curatorial Team.

Environmental Control: The Museum Resource Centre provides environmentally controlled storage conditions for our major sensitive collections. Parts of our Fine Art.

Maintenance of Conservation Records: Sensitive or vulnerable items in the collections are identified and this information recorded on the collection management database. Conservation record cards are completed for all objects and specimens undergoing conservation work. This information is also recorded on the ADLIB collections management database. Condition reports are undertaken for all objects identified as at risk, selected for display/regular education sessions or prior to loan.

Staff and Volunteer Training: All staff and volunteers working with our collection are trained and monitored to ensure they understand and implement our standards of collection care. Training needs and provision are reviewed as part of Shropshire Museums planning cycle. A full Collection Documentation Manual is maintained by us.

17.04 Professional conservation advice

Shropshire Museums has assessed the need for conservation staff and has made arrangements to meet this need within the resources available to it. These are outlined in section 01.08 above.

18. Risk assessment and security systems

18.01 Controlling risks to our staff and users

All museum procedures undergo annual risk assessments and, where appropriate COSHH assessment, in accordance with Shropshire Council’s policy and current legislations.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Risks posed by the collection to people			
Asbestos	Low	High	Boxes containing items with pose a risk are marked. Items records are flagged.
Toxins	Low	High	Boxes containing items with pose a risk are marked. Items records are flagged.
Ionising Radiation	Low	High	Boxes containing items with pose a risk are marked. Items records are flagged.
Manual Handling	Medium	Medium	Boxes containing items with pose a risk are marked.

18.02 Controlling risks to the collection

There are ten recognised agents of deterioration of museum collections. A general risk assessment to the collections from these ten agents has been carried out. A more detailed object by object appraisal is carried out as items are added to the collection management database.

Shropshire Museums aim to assess the preservation needs of non-core material in the collection. We aim to ensure that this is done by an appropriate specialist at least once in the last 5 years.

Physical Force: All new acquisitions and catalogued items are packed in appropriate archival standard materials. Efforts are made to ensure that collections are not moved more than necessary thereby decreasing the risk of physical damage.

Thieves and vandals: The risk of theft or vandalism is controlled by ensuring items on display are adequately protected by showcases, staff surveillance and at specific sites by CCTV. Access to our collection by researchers and volunteers is also carefully controlled, monitored and recorded. All museum sites are protected by a security system. Intruder detection alarms are linked to the police or other appropriate monitoring service. Access to keys and security codes is strictly controlled.

Fire: A ‘no smoking’ policy covers all our museum sites. Fire detection and alarm systems are in place at all our museum sites. Fire Risk Assessments are maintained for all sites.

Water: Regular building inspections and maintenance helps to prevent water penetrating our museum buildings. At the Museum Resource Centre a gas based fire suppressant system is used in our stores.

Pests: An integrated pest management programme has been implemented. A programme of freezing of the entire collection was undertaken prior to entering the Museum Resource Centre stores. All additional organic materials entering the building are frozen to kill any pest infestation. Sticky traps are used to monitor insect pests in all stores and gallery displays of organic materials.

Contaminants: The potential for harmful gases from paints and other materials is considered when selecting showcases and decorating our museum sites. Objects which have the potential to be harmful to other parts of the collection are to minimise this risk. Sensitive materials are handled with gloves. Proper packing and display cases also minimise the risk from dust and other airborne contaminants.

Radiation: Light levels in our stores and galleries are monitored and kept to a minimum using blinds, UV film on windows and where appropriate removing windows.

Temperature: Temperature levels in our stores and galleries are monitored and kept as stable and closed to the optimum (16-18°C) as possible.

Humidity: Humidity levels in our stores and galleries are monitored and kept as stable and close to the optimum (55%RH) as possible.

Handling collection: Shropshire Museums has a system in place for monitoring the use of collections. Internal Movement Forms record objects removed from store. This information is used to inform preservation and conservation planning. In order to reduce the risk of damage and deterioration to the accessioned collection caused by handling the County Museum Service has established a series of handling collections. These allow real objects to be placed on open display and used during special events and educational sessions.

Shropshire Museums has a written policy on the use of volunteers for collection care activities. All collection care tasks are planned with curatorial advice. Full handling guidelines are provided to all volunteers.

Shropshire Museums has in place guidelines on the behaviour of contractors / service providers on site to ensure collection care is not compromised.

Shropshire Museums includes preservation priorities in the aims and objectives of all forward planning. Those responsible for preservation are included in the decision-making team of the Museum Service.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Risk posed by the collection to the environment			
Pollutants	Low	High	Boxes containing items with pose a risk are marked. Items records are flagged.
Risks posed to the collection by the collection			
An objects inherent instability	Medium	Medium	Boxes containing items with pose a risk are marked. Items records

			are flagged.
Other collection items	Medium	High	Boxes containing items with pose a risk are marked and are packed separately. Items records are flagged.
Risks posed to the collection by the environment			
Action by people (including accidental or malicious damage, theft and loss, neglect, operation, handling and use, hospitality and events, and use by media organizations)	Low	High	Handling Guidelines circulated to staff and volunteers.
Incidents: fire	Low	High	See Fire Risk Assessment.
Incidents: flood	Low	High	See Corporate Risk Assessment.
Incidents: storm or building failure	Low	High	See Corporate Risk Assessment.
Environmental factors: temperature	Low	High	
Environmental factors: humidity	Low	High	
Environmental factors: light (including ultraviolet light)	Low	High	
Environmental factors: gaseous pollutants	Low	High	
Environmental factors: particulate pollutants	Low	High	
Environmental factors: pests	Low	High	
Technological factors such as unavailability of appropriate hardware and/or software.	Low	Low	Backup procedures and data security systems in place. Paper records available for the majority of the collection.

18.03 Emergency planning

An Emergency Plan is available for each of our museum sites. Shropshire Museums is also a member of the West Midlands Emergency Response Network.

19. Formal approval

Shropshire Museums Collection Management Policy (including the Collections Development Policy, Documentation Policy and Care and Conservation Policy) has been prepared by Emma-Kate Lanyon, Team Leader, Collections and Curatorial and agreed by the Curatorial Board.

The statement of purpose and key aims described in this document has received formal approval by Shropshire Council. Confirmation of this authorisation can be found in the minutes of the 02 May 2012 Cabinet meeting.

The review of this policy on the 20 December 2014 addressed a number of issues raised in the Accreditation review process namely:

- The need to highlight key statements within the policy required under the Museum Accreditation standard.
- The need to streamline the document and remove repetition within the policy and overlap with other policy documents.
- Amend in light of a service restructure which has affected the financial resources and staffing levels to support collection management within Shropshire Museums.

Further amendments were made on 20 June 2017 to reflect further structural changes to the service and to take account of progress to date.

This review was approved by Lezley Picton, Portfolio Holder of Leisure and Culture.

Signed:



Date: 18/8/17

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